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ASAKUSA

Time portal to Old Japan

SUPER JAPANESE ANIMATION

ケロ★軍曹 ぐんぞう

Sgt. Frog
Amazing Nuts!
Keitai Shojo
Fist of the North Star

Japanese Custom Bike

BIG SCOOTER

An AKIRA-inspired industry fave

Japanese Pop Entertainment Center

JOYPOLIS

Adventures in a metropolitan funhouse!

Vol.01 No.01
2007 APR

別冊 **JANIME**

4

SPECIAL DEBUT ISSUE
GIVEAWAYS!!



Greetings!

We are a magazine that strives to introduce Japanese pop and subculture to the people of the world. We are POPJNEO. We bring you the latest trends as well as information on Japan's traditional culture, catering to a vast interest span.

"What's that food called *takoyaki* I always hear about?" "I want to know more about that toy I've never seen before!" "Will that movie hit the theaters outside of Japan??" "Give me more info on this new artist!"

Be the first to receive the latest news on popular trends and culture with us. And if the chance ever arises, go to Japan to find out if what we say in this magazine is all true!

The cover of this first commemorative issue was shot in Akihabara. This is definitely a fascinating and enchanting town full of intrigue. We plan to do a special feature on Akihabara in the future so stay tuned!



A traditionally-themed musical group called MYST



The new face of Akihabara



A 3D poster made possible with modern technology





Popular canned oden

In front of a radio meeting hall

A peculiar and unique shop

It was a cold day

Specialty shops galore

Let's go to Akihabara!!

Maps of Akihabara available at the stations

More on this next issue

Eye-catching billboards

Strolling Sunday bliss



Part 1
Epilogue
Birth of Akane

THE SAGA OF AKANE



Ancient ruins have been discovered on the remains of planet Earth. Without delay, outer planet military authorities begin carrying out secret excavations without governmental approval and Sayuri's archaeologist father is commissioned to accompany the army on their mission. During their investigation, the remains of a mysterious creature are discovered embedded inside of a gigantic wall. Experiments are done to cultivate and reproduce the life form from the cellular debris, but prove unsuccessful due to extensive damage in the genetic code. The scientists believe the creature must be of extraterrestrial origin as it appears to have been killed by cosmic ray bombing. Eventually the missing genetic information is replaced with synthetic code, and the first prototype is successfully born... some 20 years after the original excavation. Many test subjects are born with little to no intelligence, while others have a shortened lifespan due to immune deficiencies and other defects. The one successful clone among the many failures comes to be known as Akane. Everything from the excavation to Akane's birth is held in utmost secrecy, and it is unknown what sequence of events led to the organization Monk's acquisition of Akane. What is known is that the incident is instrumental in the army's hesitation to completely destroy the remains of planet Earth. Within Monk, Akane's role is machinery operations guard, but her arrival to the organization has been met with increased interference from the army. Due to this fact, there are many within the organization who are beginning to feel her presence as a burden...

Ancient Ruins

A group of ancient ruins were discovered on a site believed to have previously been the bottom of an ocean. Thought to be 5,000-10,000 years old, actual details remain unknown. At the time of discovery, it was said there was no evidence of water having penetrated the rooms. It is theorized the mummified remains that served as Akane's origins were perhaps cryogenically preserved making it highly possible they are from an advanced civilization. Due to the involvement of the planet Medieval's army in the excavation, the truth behind the discovery of the ruins is kept secret from the public.

Mankind

Humanity is carrying out numerous experiments due to the fact that they have depleted all resources. Since the ground population has increased to intolerable levels, they set their sights on space and begin searching for other planets to colonize. Corresponding to changes in environment, various "sub-species" are born causing the emergence of disputes over human rights and various other controversies.

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COVER



Model: BeForU
Photo: Yukie Mikawa
Hair&Make-up: sakura
Location: Akihabara

BeForU OFFICIAL WEBSITE
<http://beatrevolution.i-revo.jp/beforu/>

avex BeForU WEBSITE
<http://www.avexmovie.jp/lineup/beforu/>

PRESENTS

In commemoration of our new design,
this time we've prepared many
presents for all our readers!
Fill out the questionnaire on the
website for your chance to win. Check
out the details on page 45!

<http://www.popjneo.com>

GO! GO! GO! P45!!

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What's HOT in Japan

Along with our redesign, we're going to include more contents than ever to bring you all the latest information from Japan! Of course there will still be the usual contents introduced in this corner as well as things like movies, dramas, and DVD releases. This time we bring you a journey to the traditional Japanese city Asakusa, movie introductions, D-1, Japanese Standard, and recently moved to the J通 corner, Japatorado!

This is it! It's Edo!!

A trip down to Japan's top tourist spot, Asakusa!

Asakusa, a town that still exudes the essence of Old Japan. In the area around the Asakusa Shrine, the remnants and spirit of Edo civilization can be felt. Despite the fact this is the No.1 tourist spot in Tokyo, Ben has never been here before! It's time for Ben to experience the heart of Japan on this one-day trip!

The entrance to the Asakusa Shrine, in front of the *Kaminari-mon* (Thunder Gate). Always bustling with tourists, this is definitely a spot for that Kodak moment.



Feasting in Asakusa!

What is this...?



Ben wonders if he's lost in time. The road stretching from the gate to the shrine is lined with tiny shop lots. This area is known as the Asakusa Kaminari-mon Marketplace. The street is filled with vendors selling sweets, kimono, toys, gifts and so much more. At present, there are almost 50 shops. Walking and shopping here is a must-do for every visitor.

Arrival at the main temple building!

Here is where the statue of Buddha is, making it the temple center.



This is a 5-story pagoda rising 48 meters high. Inside, a Buddhist mortuary tablet is said to be preserved.

When you enter the temple, you'll notice the smoke from the burning incense. This is something common in all temples throughout Japan. The smoke is said to cleanse your body. They say the part of your body that comes in contact with the smoke will be blessed. You might be able to improve your brain skills if you get the smoke to touch your head!!

Testing your luck with omikuji!!

Omikuji is a form of written fortune. You shake the omikuji box and take one rod out of it. You will then be presented with a piece of paper that coincides with the number on the rod. The paper will tell you the level of your luck and will also contain special messages, the best being *daikichi* (excellent luck) and the worst *daikyo* (terrible luck). Ben received *kichi*, which is the middle point, neither good nor bad.

Please let me get daikichi...

He got kichii
Hmm, but that's just so-so.

Senbei

Ningyo-yaki

Nikumanju

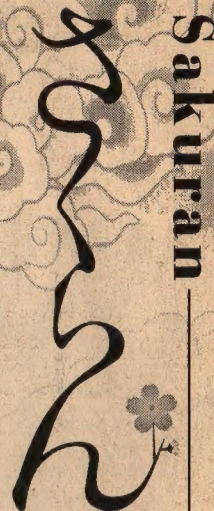
Asakusa's specialty, *ningyo-yaki*. It's a red bean-filled sponge cake that is baked. You can also get one without red bean-filling or one with custard-filling instead. It comes in various shapes, from the 7 Deities of Fortune to famous characters.

Asakusa was amazing!!





The popular comic by Moyoco Anno has been made into a hit live-action film. Set in the Edo period, it's a drama focusing on the glamorous young *oiran* (high-class courtesans) in love and illustrating the strength of women.



Sakuran



The daughter of a poor farmer, Kiyoha, was sold in infancy to Yoshiwara, the red-light district in ancient Edo. Since she was a child, her beauty held high prospects for Kiyoha's future. With a rebellious heart, she attempted repeatedly to run away, but would be severely punished.

Through the teachings of her mentor Shohi, a popular *oiran*, she starts to mature in mind and body. So begins her debut as a courtesan. Her unchanging competitive nature and strong spirit make her popular with the clients, and Kiyoha begins to climb toward fame.

When she becomes a top-ranking courtesan, she changes her name to Higure. Doing well as an *oiran*, one day Higure finds herself falling for one of her clients...

This is the directorial debut of popular photographer Mika Ninagawa. Known for her style of vivid colors, she applies the same techniques here to turn this work into a richly-colored, beautiful movie. Playing the heroine is Anna Tsuchiya, a famous model always appearing on the covers of fashion magazines. Starting with *Shimotsuma Monogatari* (Kamikaze Girls), she has acted in countless movies and is well-acknowledged, but her performance of a strong-willed courtesan in this film is particularly noted. Including the music director/charismatic rock singer Ringo Shiina, the main staff is mostly made up of 20- to 30-year old women. With a theme of "girl power," this film has been a topic of conversation for awhile now. Optimism showing in the strength of the womens' characters, this film breaks down the negative image of the *oiran* and establishes a new, cool image of the girls in love. It also highlights the men who fall in love with them. Many women show sympathy to these "chic prostitutes."



<http://www.sakuran-themovie.com/>

What is a courtesan?



A courtesan is a girl who sells her services to men typically of high-rank and wealth. More glamorous than a prostitute, the courtesans of the Edo period had to be skilled in dance and entertainment; much like the geisha. The largest red-light district was called Yoshiwara at that time. The highest rank among the courtesans was called an *oiran*. The young girls sold into the courtesan lifestyle learned many skills under the tutelage of a higher-ranked woman, until she debuted as a courtesan herself. When she became a popular *oiran*, she would change her name.



Sakuran / Moyoco Anno

Moyoco Anno is a famous author and representative of the manga world. *Sakuran* was published in the weekly manga magazine *Morning*, oriented toward young boys, and became a big hit. Its popularity lead toward its production into a movie. Right now the manga is not available in print, but there has been a huge demand for it to be re-released.

©2007 Ninagawa-gumi "Sakuran" film committee

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Drift
Japan

Spocon Damashii スポン魂

Edited by Hiro Ishida

Base: TOYOTA AE86 TRUENO
Owner/Driver: Takehito Hara

We bring you the AE86, the drift machine of *Initial D* fame. Owner Takehito Hara works as a private mechanic now, but for a long time worked as a mechanic for an automobile maker. A true professional, he was also on the *Initial D* movie crew that traveled to Shanghai. This is a 2nd generation AE86 but he also owns a beat up AE86 he got from his friend which he restored and customized. Hara also gets his friends together and reserves race tracks to have private competitions among his buddies. On top of all that, he also does body work. His knowledge of essential information such as the universal usage of parts is very advanced, and he is held in high esteem among his colleagues. They show their gratitude by using the "HARA Racing" stickers.



Like the Soarer we featured until last issue, the AE86 also has a turbo installed. The bonnet/hood has the image of a Kabuki kumadori depicted on it. Matched with the body color, its color varies from that of the Soarer.



Takehito Hara, who was worked as a mechanic for major Japanese automobile manufacturers. Acting as mechanic for his friends, before he knew it his HARA racing stickers started to become widespread.

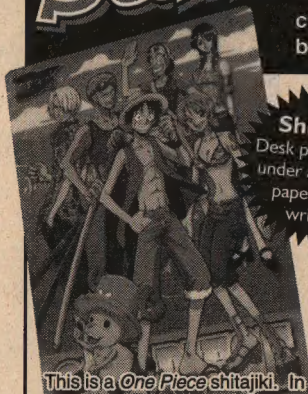
His front bumper sports the URAS made NOMU-KEN, steadily popular in the D1 world. He shaped the fenders himself. The side skirts are Goodline made. The overall balance is appropriate to the AE86.



The maker of the rear bumper is UN-KNOWN. The projected spoiler is from TRD. The tail lenses are customary euro-style with clear lenses.

Japanese Standard

Food products aren't the only place you'll find anime characters used to add selling appeal. Stationery goods also provide a gold mine for character lovers. Because they can use them at school, kids are always on the hunt to collect stationery featuring their favorite characters. This time we'll show you several notebooks, but we'll be back in future issues bringing you more fun stationery!



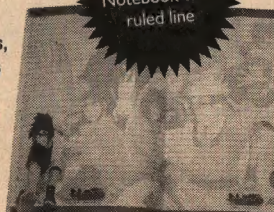
Shitaiki
Desk pad (placed under a sheet of paper when writing)

This is a *One Piece* shitaiki. In Japanese elementary schools, when students take notes they place a plastic shitaiki like this one under their paper and write with a pencil. The shitaiki prevents dents from forming on the underside of the paper so attractive writing can be achieved. This *One Piece* version features an illustration featuring the story's main characters. The back is lined with a graph and a ruler printed along the edge, while the main character's image is in the middle.



Naruto is featured on this notebook. On each page beneath the ruled lining is a lightly printed, large illustration of *Naruto* characters. Basically, it's a standard-ruled notebook with a character design printed on its pages. This notebook may look like an overseas product to some due to the English printed in small text at the bottom.

No-to
Notebook with ruled line



SUPER JAPANESE ANIMATION



Sgt. Frog

ぐんそう ケロロ軍曹

Japan's world of anime is
under the command of Sergeant Keroro!

© Mine Yoshizaki/Kadokawashoten, SUNRISE-TV, TOKYO NAS



STORY

Sgt. Frog is a serialization in Kadokawa bookstore's monthly manga magazine *Shonen Ace*. At present there are 14 published volumes of the comic, its popularity becoming a social phenomenon selling over ten million copies. The main character Sgt. Keroro is a Gundam otaku so the series has many references to the *Gundam* series', *Evangelion*, and other popular robot anime series as well as parodies of the special

effects in shows like *Ultraman*, making it enjoyable for fans of anime and special effects. The multitude of cute characters capture the attention of female viewers as well. Not just for kids, this series is full of parodies and black humor and will appeal to mature anime fans too. Adults will find themselves impressed and laughing at the series' content.

OUTLINE

From the 58th planet Keron in the Gama galaxy, an army was dispatched with the aim of taking over the Earth. A special force called the Keroro Platoon, a 5-soldier group lead by Sgt. Keroro, was sent to the Earth ahead of the rest. What started out as a quest for world domination soon changes as they become members of the Hinata family. While living in the Hinatas' house and being forced to do household chores, Sgt. Keroro begins his takeover of the world.

Character Introduction

With vast amounts of merchandise produced, the Keroro Platoon is immensely popular. Is the rumor true that every house in Japan has at least one Keroro item?!

Keroro Platoon

Sergeant Keroro

The leader of the Keroro Platoon sent to take over the Earth. His hobby is making Gundam models.

Private Tamama

Although her appearance is very cute, she's scary when angry!

Corporal Giroro

The only one in the Keroro Platoon who has the personality of a soldier.

Sergeant Major Kururu

A disagreeable but smart guy.

Lance Corporal Dororo

A nature-loving and kind-hearted assassin soldier. His existence is fairly bleak.

Hinata Platoon

Fuyuki Hinata

The eldest son of the Hinata family. Loves the occult and mysterious.

Aki Hinata

Fuyuki and Natsumi's mom. Works as an editor for a manga publication.

Natsumi Hinata

Fuyuki's athletic older sister.

The music of Sgt. Keroro is also extremely popular. This time we included something new into the equation.

The movie *Sgt. Frog 2: The Deep-sea Princess* played in Japan in March and April. At the press conference and premiere of the song "Yoki ni hakarae!" which is featured in both movies, songwriter Pappara Kawai (ex-Bakufu Slump), Kumiko Watanabe (Keroro), Jyoji Nakata (Giroro), Etsuko Kozakura (Tamama), Takehito Koyasu (Kururu), and Takeshi Kusao

(Dororo) were present. The completed song will throw you into the world of Sgt. Keroro. "I think the humor in Sgt. Keroro is the irrationality, the things you least expect to happen will happen. The absurdity is furthered with the song, and it's all very funny." (-Kumiko Watanabe) "The lyrics 'a smelt's hike up the waterfall' and 'an eel is a fish' are the best. The composition where

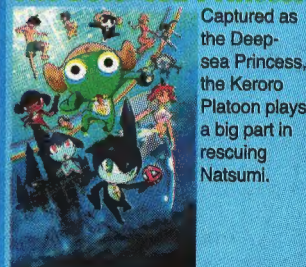
strange things are being sung and then the whole song comes to an abrupt end just makes it the perfect song." (-Takehito Koyasu) "The title 'Yoki ni hakarae!' tells the entire story of Sgt. Keroro in one line." (-Takeshi Kusao)



The main voice actors strike a Keroro pose!

Definitely experience it if you have the chance!

Sgt. Keroro 2: The Deep-sea Princess



Captured as the Deep-sea Princess, the Keroro Platoon plays a big part in rescuing Natsumi.

©2007 Mine Yoshizaki/Kadokawa Shoten, KADOKAWA HERALD PICTURES SUNRISE TV TOKYO NAS



A love story brought to you by Keitai Shojo Rin

In December 2005, G-mode released a dating simulation game designed for the cell phone called "Keitai Shojo," which became an immediate hit. Because of its success, Yahoo! Japan released original animated videos (OAVs) based on the game beginning March 20th. A girl named Rin

pops out of the cell phone of the main character Hiro Aida, and with her guidance he meets 5 girls and involves himself in their daily lives. The OAVs consist of short stories about the characters and incidents that happened before the current storyline in the game. Many people have started playing the

game after watching the animation. In addition, official character blogs and polls have been set up. They have plans to release a special animation with a different ending featuring the top-voted character. This is an interactive project relying on user participation.

We snuck in after recording to talk with the wonderful voice acting group! Here are their messages!

Chihiro Suzuki (Kelsuke Kotaka):

It's a very pure high school love story and the ending scene is enough to warm your heart, so definitely check it out. For the people who haven't played the game, I hope you'll give it a try to further understand the story.

Akira Ishida (Hiro Aida): Please vote after selecting the ending that makes you think "There's nothing better than this!" We're serious about this, so I hope you all make this choice seriously too!

Rina Sato (Ayano Yamada):

There are many fascinating girls in the story, and I hope you'll enjoy them all. Those of you who've played the game, I think you'll find some new discoveries after watching the animation. If you haven't played it, there's an episode where the characters are introduced, so please have a look.

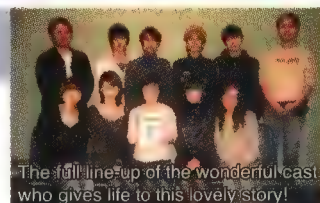
Aml Koshimizu (Ichiru Mishima):

The story gives people who are troubled by love the confidence to take a step forward. This is a good

place to start so I hope you'll enjoy the charm of the various girls.

Haruhi Terada (Rin): I hope people who haven't played "Keitai Shojo" yet, or the people who think "I played it once but..." will check out the animation. It will be great if the people who have played it before find it to be a new opportunity to meet other girls, and it might make you want to start playing the game again.

Mikako Takahashi (Sayo Tomoe): I'm so happy that "Keitai Shojo" became this big. The ending is



The full line-up of the wonderful cast who gives life to this lovely story!

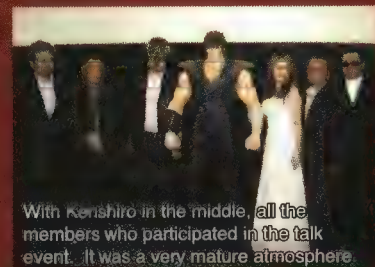
very pure, and was bittersweet in a way that made me blush. I hope you enjoy it!

Kana Ueda (Miya Goto):

Please put in one vote you have no regrets toward. I think it would be good if you continue through the whole series to see the development of the anime. Please continue to support "Keitai Shojo."

The special pre-screening and talk event was a big success!

At the talk event, authors Bronson and Tetsuo Hara, production director Nobuhiko Horie, J-gei voice actor David Ito, and theme song artist Crystal King all attended. As it was Valentine's Day the day after the screening, the famous Makiyo Aida appeared in a white dress like Yuria's as a special surprise to the male fans of Fist of the North Star. Bronson and Tetsuo Hara had not yet seen the completed work on the day of the screening. They were quoted saying, "We'll enjoy it with the fans," while Nobuhiko Horie said, "If you watch the last movie and this OVA, images from the next fighting arc will sink through your



With Kenshiro in the middle, all the members who participated in the talk event. It was a very mature atmosphere.

head involuntarily." David Ito and Musshu Yoshizaki also contributed to the discussion, and there's no doubt it's a movie packed with fascinating facts.

The second DVD installment of the famous comic is finally released!

A miracle of the manga world. Fist of the North Star. When Kenshiro was fighting against his enemies, where was Yuria, and what was happening around her? It's been 23 years since the story was serialized and finished, but now another story that never made it into the manga is presented to you on DVD. The second installment will surprise even fans of the original work!



Fist of the North Star True Savior Legend: The Legend of Yuria

<p>Limited First Edition ASBY-3675 2 disc set ¥8,190 15 minutes plus bonus footage</p>	<p>Regular Edition ASBY-3676 ¥6,090 65 minutes plus bonus footage</p>
--	---

2007.2.23 Release!

It's not that we crave more speed.

RICE ROCKETIA

The world of AKIRA alive in present-day Japan!

Here is RICE ROCKETIA where we will bring you news and info on the coolest automobiles from Japan in real time. In this first installment, we go to Tokyo and check out some custom scooters! These amazingly-designed bikes are just the right size for Japan's busiest city. The stylish scooters are equipped with customized gadgets that will stir one's imagination!

The exterior of this scooter is a lot simpler than the other two. But the town-style and polished appearance gives it a classy look.

**HONDA
SILVER WING 650
OWNER Pete Gail**



Another cool move implemented here is the chrome-plated parts that decorate the handle. It sure smacks of luxury here!

This machine was customized with "luxury" as a theme, using the Silver Wing, which is also available in America. This black lowdown style is made possible with Honda's original Black Pearl paint creating a cool appearance. All of the parts are bought in America and modified. The upgraded massive muffler and long rear spoiler is also a big appeal of this scooter.

Traversing down the street on one of these custom scooters is the latest hot and hip trend.

Never-ending traffic jams. Narrow roads. And the road system in Tokyo which is probably the worst in the world. When it comes to convenient transportation tools, these big scooters are gaining popularity as opposed to cars. However, the reason behind its recognition is slowly taking a twist. Today, people are indulging in these scooters as a hobby. Welcome to the world of custom scooters. TOSHI and his friends, who appear in this month's feature, are known by everyone in this scene as they have been

around since the early days. It's not an exaggeration to say they're the top-ranking scooter customizers. Just look at their machines featured here as proof!! You could say scooters that once graced the screen in various Japanese anime are brought to life by them. This may seem extreme to you but wait till you see them riding the scooters down the street. When you see one of their machines riding past buildings, it makes you wonder if it really is Kaneda from the movie AKIRA!

It's Just the machines that run so fast!

TOSHI, who is looked upon as the leader of the pack, owns this Majesty. The paint work was done using a tribal motif on a white body creating a wild look. The wheel spinner and flame-designed rear spoiler are used to create a sharp style. The cab is modified and the engine tuned with a boreup to add speed.

YAMAHA MAJESTY250 OWNER TOSHI

Check out the wheel spinners that continue to rotate even when the scooter is stationary. This edgy feature brings out the style of this custom scooter.



BELL backbone spoiler is used as the base to create a flame image on the rear spoiler. This design looks like it would be a hit in America.



What do you think?
Pretty amazing, huh?



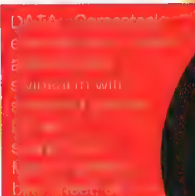
Check out the 13-inch x 8J wheel on this scooter. A single-sided swingarm is used to mount the wheel just like those on an automobile.

OWNER HIRORIN



SUZUKI SKYWAVE 250

The Sky Wave slammed to base. What surprises us even more is the owner HIRORIN here! The most important element of this slammed style is the remodeled and upgraded frame that's one-of-a-kind. The air suspensions make it easier to control the height of the bike, contributing to easy and safe handling. The cute heart motifs used on her bike is also just so chic. Isn't it?



The long body and the paint used create a surreal look that feels out of this world. It's because of machines like this on the road that we call Tokyo a cyber city!



The meter is set with an LCD monitor that has a digital meter and a small DVD monitor on both sides.



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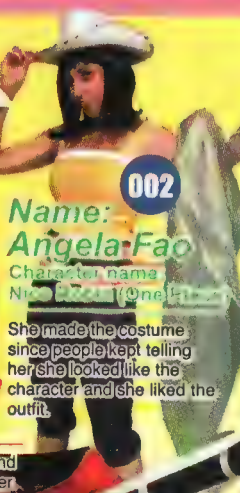
COSPLAY JUNCTION

Aim to be the Cosplayer of the Year!!!

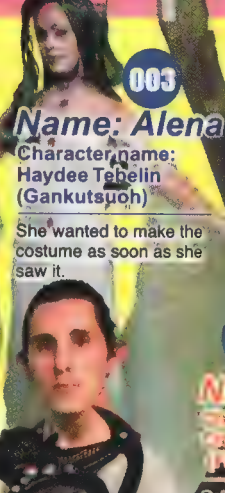
Every issue we tally up the votes from you, the readers, in our quest to find the Cosplayer of the Year. Once again we announce the latest winner of our monthly contest...#364 Joshua Chambers' Dark Link from "The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess" emerged victorious in issue #9's contest! He has now been entered as a candidate in the Cosplayer of the Year competition. Who will win from this issue? You decide! Send in your votes!



001
Name: Krissy Davis
Character name: Faye (Chobit)
Krissy designed the costume, and her aunt and mom made it for her.



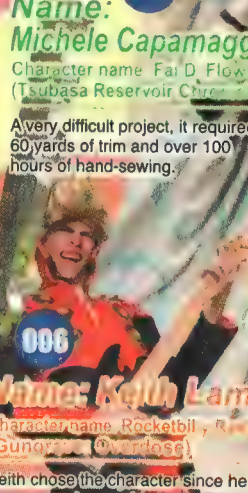
002
Name: Angela Fao
Character name: Nico Klotz (One Piece)
She made the costume since people kept telling her she looked like the character and she liked the outfit.



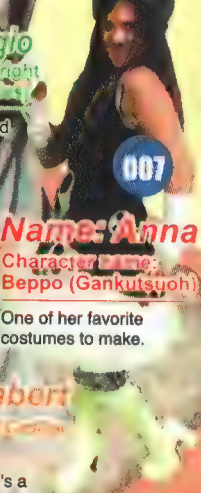
003
Name: Alena
Character name: Haydee Telerin (Gankutsuoh)
She wanted to make the costume as soon as she saw it.



004
Name: Joe
Character name: Cloud Strife (Final Fantasy VII)
Self-made over 1 year



006
Name: Keith Lambert
Character name: Rocketbil (Gungrave Overdose)
Keith chose the character since he's a ghost, a rocker, and has the coolest hair this side of Nashville.



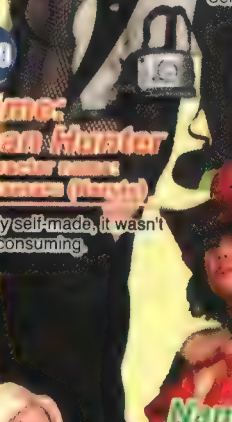
007
Name: Anna
Character name: Beppo (Gankutsuoh)
One of her favorite costumes to make.



008
Name: Ed
Character name: Suiseiseki (Rozen Maiden)
Ed couldn't resist commissioning the costume from TSSZ.



009
Name: Sean Hunter
Character name: Shikamae (Higurashi)
Mostly self-made, it wasn't time consuming.



010
Name: Jackie
Character name: Lita (Philly Gear)
A difficult costume, she hand-made all the buckles.



014
Name: Beth Burr
Character name: Squall (Final Fantasy VIII)
Decided to do a sexy version of her favorite character.



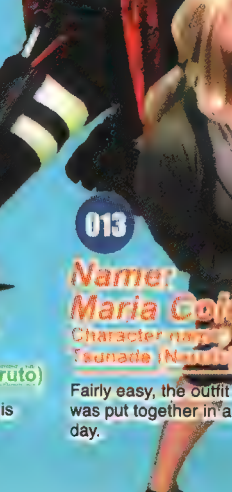
011
Name: Denny Denial
Character name: Kigurumi (Japan)
Denny wants to spread the awareness of Kigurumi in America.



015
Name: Benjamin Forath
Character name: Cloud Strife (Final Fantasy VII)
Wanted a cosplay with a big sword, so he chose Cloud.



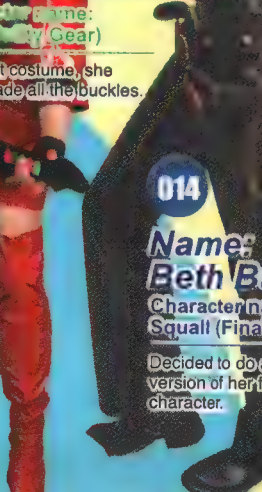
012
Name: Cassandra
Character name: Sakura Haruno (Naruto)
She feels the character is under-cosplayed.



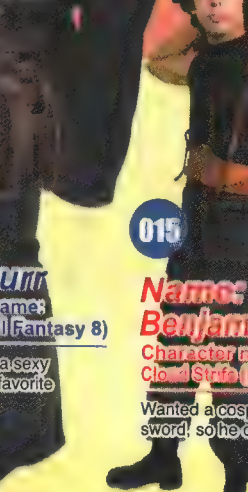
013
Name: Maria Gole
Character name: Tsunade (Naruto)
Fairly easy, the outfit was put together in a day.



010
Name: Jackie
Character name: Lita (Philly Gear)
A difficult costume, she hand-made all the buckles.



014
Name: Beth Burr
Character name: Squall (Final Fantasy VIII)
Decided to do a sexy version of her favorite character.



011
Name: Denny Denial
Character name: Kigurumi (Japan)
Denny wants to spread the awareness of Kigurumi in America.



015
Name: Benjamin Forath
Character name: Cloud Strife (Final Fantasy VII)
Wanted a cosplay with a big sword, so he chose Cloud.

COSPLAY JUNCTION

016

Name:
A. Douglas
Character name:
Linea (Stella Deus)

She loved the game and found the outfit very hard to sew.

Name:
Hayley Chapman

Character name:
Prier (Stella Deus)

A challenge, it involved lots of painting and hand-crafting.

018

Name:
Lindsay
Character name:
Tia (Stella Deus)

Lindsay chose the costume to be in a group with some friends. But it was harder than she thought.

019

Name:
Michael Weiss
Character name:
Zephaniah (Stella Deus)

Part of a group, he found the base of the costume easy, but the finishing touches a challenge.

024

Name:
Laura
Character name:
Count of Monte Cristo (Punkinhead)

A huge project, everything was hand-made.

020

Name:
Mank
Character name:
Albert de Mank (Punkinhead)

Made over a lot of late nights in the company of friends.

021

Name:
Stefano
Character name:
Child Gena (Naruto)

She feels her face makes for an adorable little boy.

022

Name:
Jessica Sowers

Character name:
Chi (Chobits)

Made by Emily Rimer.

023

Name:
Don
Character name:
Nobara (Naruto)

The arm guards and sword were custom made from fiber glass.

030

Name:
Anne
Character name:
Mecha (Excel Saga)

Mecha needs love...but people keep trying to eat her!

025

Name:
Emily Rimer
Character name:
Papa (Chobits)

She wanted a big, poofy costume that everyone would love.

027

Name:
Leah Nicola
Character name:
Dinah (Bleach)

Very hard to make, blood, sweat and tears went into the dress.

028

Name:
Ed Scarbrough
Character name:
Hina Ichigo (Rosen Maiden)

The costume was mostly commissioned.

029

Name:
Kelly
Character name:
Tsunade (Naruto)

Chose the outfit since she is a large-chested anime character who doesn't wear skimpy clothes.

026

Name:
Ethan
Character name:
Hidan (Naruto)

Self-made all props and accessories.

We want your votes!!

The counter has been reset and the battle commences for a new champion. Be sure to include the entry number when casting your vote!

To vote, simply visit our homepage at <http://www.popjneo.com>

Click on the [Reader's Vote] button and use the mail form on that page. Fill out the form with your email address and in the text box type the entry number of the cosplayer of your choice. Make sure to check the [Best Cosplay] box before you hit the [Submit] button. And with that your vote will be cast! Remember that the power to determine who wins lies in you!

Amazing Nuts! GLOBAL ASTROLINER

The 4th installment of the super popular ongoing project! It's the perfect fusion of music and animation. To get the scoop on how it all came together, we'll go to director Daisuke Nakayama!

Interview - Daisuke Nakayama

This time you have a new approach in your collaboration with musicians. But were there any fundamental differences in making the anime?

I think the usual way to make music videos is to create images that match with the music, but this time was different. First of all, we cut a storyboard and brought it to m-flo, then discussed the feel and details of the piece. With the storyboard as a base, they created music to match. I truly think we achieved a

new form of visual and musical collaboration. **While doing so, was there anything you particularly took into consideration or had trouble with?**

This time, we tried a different form of music video production so I was worried about whether or not the music and images would be properly synchronized. But the music m-flo provided us was perfect. It was just what I wanted to express. The song has some variations in it, but when we matched it up with the images, it came out just right. We didn't have any particular trouble, everything went

smoothly. And we had a lot of fun.

What was the inspiration for the motif?

It mostly came from everyday doodling. I draw characters that come to me at random times in notebooks and on business card-size message cards. The main character of Global, the space detective,

also came to me one day while just randomly drawing.

Any highlights you'd like to share?

I wanted to depict an "energetic heat," something very different from the currently popular pallid & realistic animation. I made this anime with this feeling in mind. So I guess the highlights would be the characters and the "energy" the anime holds within it.

How about a message for all the readers in America?

More than Japanese anime, this production resembles American comics, so I think American viewers will feel more familiar with it than those in Japan, and may find it more accessible. Come to know Japanese hip hop culture through "Global Astroliner!"



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www.HAREGUU.COM

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DELUXE

THE JUNGLE FEVER CONTINUES!

an

Bang Zoom! Entertainment

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rent anime RENTANIME.COM

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JAPATORADO ジャパトラ道

Road to Japanese Traditions

Sensory overload at the TOKYO JOYPOLIS!

This time we took a trip to the famous Tokyo play spot Odaiba to visit the indoor amusement park known as the TOKYO JOYPOLIS. With so many attractions and arcade games to stimulate the senses, it was an experience of non-stop excitement!



Welcome to the future!!

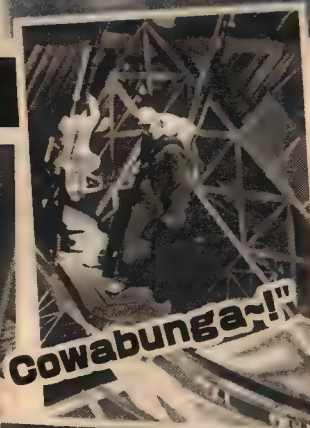
©SEGA

① HALFPIPE CANYON



The staff explains the rules and how to operate the board.

This ride was tricky. If you don't stomp down with perfect timing, your board doesn't spin and you don't get any points. But when you get it right, it's a thrill!



② WILD JUNGLE BROTHERS

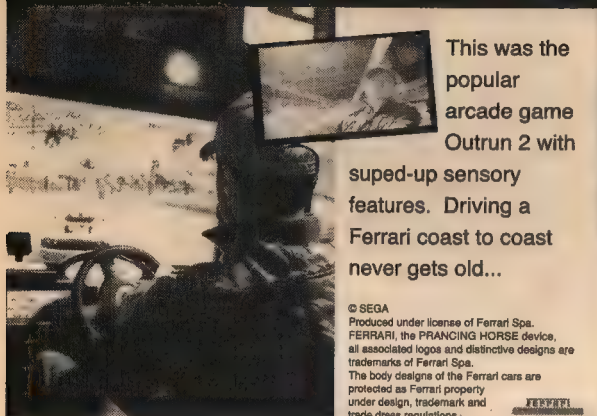
And now we try our hand at the popular Wild Jungle ride. Does Ben have what it takes to make it through the savageland?



This was an Indiana Jones-esque ride in a self-aware jeep. It was an exciting adventure that took you to the heart of the jungle and never once got boring.

Vroom vroom!!

③ OUTRUN 2 SPECIAL TOURS SDX



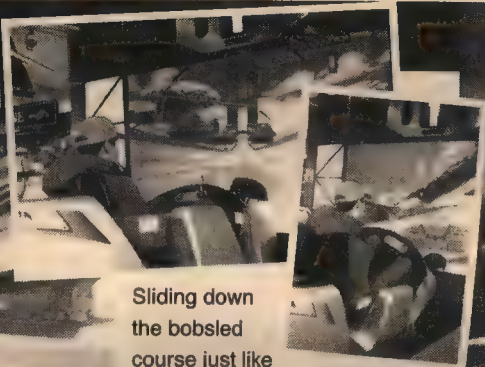
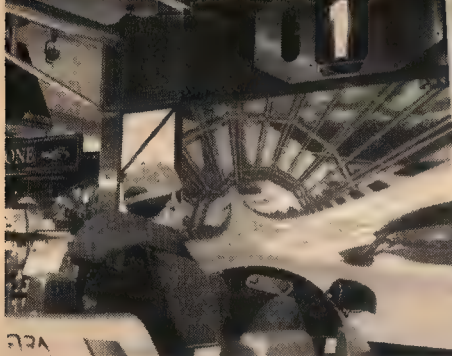
This was the popular arcade game Outrun 2 with

suped-up sensory features. Driving a Ferrari coast to coast never gets old...

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Produced under license of Ferrari SpA.
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The body designs of the Ferrari cars are protected as Ferrari property under design, trademark and trade dress regulations.



④ POWER SLED



Sliding down the bobsled course just like in the Olympics...of course I got the gold medal!

Ichiban baby!
oh yeah~



⑤ THE ROOM OF LIVING DOLLS

This was a horror attraction you experienced solely through sound. It was so realistic I thought the creepy children were right next to me!



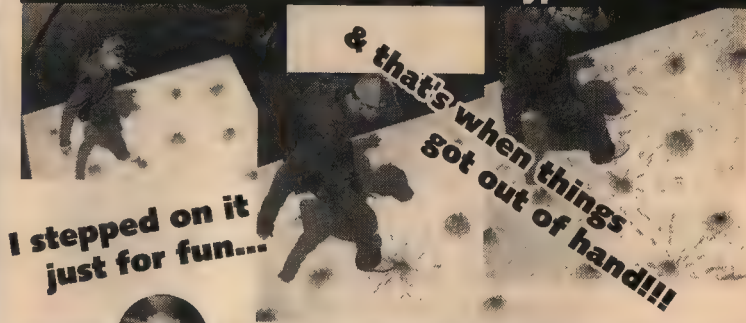
Just what's going on here?

HOLY---!!

Ben's impressions

The Joypolis is a great place to come hang out and try the latest games and rides...but watch out for the creepy murderous dolls!!

I discovered an ant hill on the Joypolis floor...



I stepped on it just for fun...

& that's when things got out of hand!!!



BREAK TIME @ JOYPOLIS

Dippin' Dots Ice-Cream may be known in America, but try eating it at JOYPOLIS to experience a new taste!
After a vigorous day of fun, enjoy Dippin' Dots Ice-Cream while looking out into the vast expanse of rides and attractions!!

TOKYO JOYPOLIS

DECKS Tokyo Beach 3F~5F 1-6-1 Daiba Minato-ku Tokyo 135-0091 Japan
OPEN: 10:00~23:00 (Last Entry 22:15) CLOSE: Irregular days off
<http://sega.jp/joypolis/tokyo/>

MANGA BIN

Vol.7 Sports Manga Feature 2

Introducing you to Japanese manga genre by genre!!

Our Manga Special Feature from JANIME makes a comeback in this magazine with a new title! We bring you more sports manga in this debut issue of POPJNEO. There are just so many sports manga out there to present!

A story of youth and basketball **SLAMDUNK**

©井上雄彦 I.T.Planning, Inc.

Hanamichi Sakuragi is recommended to join the basketball team by the team captain's sister, Haruko Akagi, due to his height and potential. Unbelievably beautiful, no one would suspect she is the younger sister of team captain Takenori, who is known as "King Kong under the basket." Hanamichi is immediately taken with her and joins the basketball team to get close to her. The Shohoku High School team was weak and unknown, but under the guidance of giant captain Akagi, novice Hanamichi's concentration ability and potential develop. They are also joined by Kaede Rukawa, a cool and calm basketball prodigy. As they diligently train, they start to bloom as star players and steadily begin moving towards the national championships.



Loved by the wind and the birds, the boy who flew the skies

Air Gear

©Oh!Great 2003・KODANSHA

Air tracks are flight-capable rollerblades that changed the history of in-line skating by utilizing an ultra small motor capable of 4kw output. Itsuki Minami is a 14-year old boy genius with sharpened senses and eyes like a hawk who gets his hands on a pair of air tracks. His passion for flying the skies is unmatched, and so he creates a team with his friends. They then come into confrontation and have a showdown with the team lead by the stormriders.

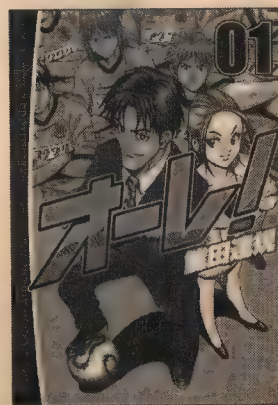


A mature human sports drama

Ole!

©Tatsuki Nohda

This manga follows the trials and tribulations of Junji Nakajima, a young government worker assigned the task of regional promotion, and Shoko Yoshimi, a volunteer worker at Ole, in a city facing a population decline due to construction of an aqua line. One day while working at city hall, Nakajima receives a notice of an assignment change to the soccer team called "Jouzou Ole." Frustrated, Nakajima gives up his dream to remake the city. But in his enthusiasm to encourage the players and supporters of the small soccer team, his feelings to achieve that dream rekindle.

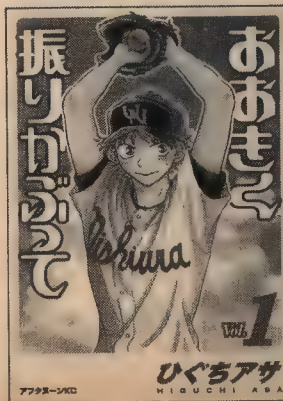


Enigmatic ace and baseball addict (Damepii)

Ookiku Furikabutte

©Asa Higuchi 2004・KODANSHA

Main character Ren Mihashi was the pitcher for the Gunma Middle School Mitsuboshi Gakuen team, a school managed by his grandfather. But with 3 winless years, he realizes the only reason he is pitching is because he's related to the school manager. He runs away and enrolls in Saitama Nishiura High School. There he joins the newly established baseball team, but the coach is a baseball-experienced female alumnus with a team of only 10 delinquent freshmen. This story focuses on the mentally weak Mihashi and follows the growth of the characters and the baseball team.



A gift from the gods

Rising Impact

©2007 by Nakaba Suzuki/SHUEISHA Inc.

This is the story of a cheerful and optimistic half-Japanese elementary school boy, Gawain Nanaumi, who immerses himself in golfing. In facing off with famous golfers from around the world, he finds a worthy opponent in Lancelot Norman, and begins his transformation into a superior athlete golfer. Like many sports manga, this story focuses on the hardships and character of the protagonist, and is written in a light atmosphere. Although the serialization has finished, it has been revived due to fans' enthusiastic requests.



WWW.POPJNEO.COM
TEL: (310) 378-0826

FASHION TREND UPDATE

h.NAOTO

h.NAOTO NEW SHOP REPORT!!

h.NAOTO OIONE Shinjuku

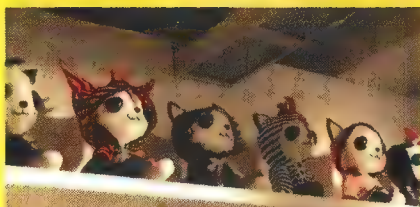
TEL: 03-3358-1889

OIONE Shinjuku 5F 3-18-1 Shinjuku Shinjuku-ku

Tokyo Japan 160-0022

Business Hours: 11:30~21:00

Sundays, holidays: 11:30~20:30



Plush dolls of mascots Hangry & Angry greeted customers from the shelves on the store walls.



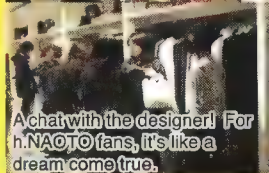
The lineup of shirts and T-shirts. There are so many it's difficult to choose!



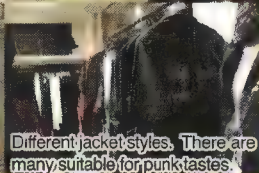
This shelf displays tote bags and accessory bags.



A bunch of cute accessories.



A chat with the designer! For h.NAOTO fans, it's like a dream come true.



Different jacket styles. There are many suitable for punk tastes.



There are many seasonally-designed items for the beginning of spring!



Looking at various things. Did you find something you like?

Gothic, punk, unisex...

Fusing together many different elements, h.NAOTO isn't just hailed by the Japanese, but has lots of fans overseas as well. With Harajuku as its starting point, h.NAOTO's stores have expanded and now they've opened a new shop in OIONE Shinjuku! Since opening day, many customers have come to check it out. The day of the commemoration event, when designers Hirooka and minto appeared, was a huge success, the floor space completely crowded with customers.

Our editorial department also went to the event!

We got to talk with the two designers and we bring you the scoop from this alluring event.



The two visiting designers.



The shop manager of the OIONE Shinjuku store.



One of the shop employees with a punk-style coordinate.

Interview with h.NAOTO designer Naoto Hirooka

What's the brand concept of h.NAOTO?

"The basis is gothic, Lolita, and punk. Placing emphasis in the world that Japanese visual kei created, we pioneer new styles."

When you're designing, what things do you keep in mind?

"I like to include parts of Japanese culture popular overseas, including anime, cosplay, and visual kei into my creations."

What's the charm in h.NAOTO?

"The halfway-done parts. In the basic concept, the charm is in the many things that are mixed together, sort of like Tokyo."



Interview with Sixx. designer minto

What's the brand concept of Sixx.?

"Although it's NAOTO SEVEN's men's line, the concept is a unisex mode-style."

When you're designing, what things do you keep in mind?

"I think about the balance of the clothes when they're being worn. For example, a simple top to match wide pants."

What's the charm in Sixx.?

"The fact that one item has many variations depending on the way you wear it. For example, you can mix it with other brands. The number one charm point would be the versatility."





Coordinated just the way they like it with Sexy Dynamite London.

Getting down with famous brand Black Peace Now.

HARAJUKU

Street Fashion Snap!



Take a close look at the handmade accessories!



Check out the red and pink colored contact lenses!



Pink is our key color, here!



Found in a vintage shop and redesigned!

Self-designed kimono with a punk style!

FASHION TREND UPDATE

A strawberry-themed pink coordinate. Look at the handmade accessories.

Check out the two in their punk tees and jackets.

Two lolitas in their favorite Angelic Pretty wear.

A nice couple here! This goth-lolita's red dress is impressive.

Look at the nail art that matches today's

The black and hot pink necktie is a charmer on the two punksters!

A punkster and goth-lolita shopping in Harajuku.

BeForU try

BEMANI idol

Sayaka Minami

Riyu Kosaka

Yoma



Who's WHO?

BeForU is a vocal unit scouted from the "Dance Dance Revolution" audition. They have provided vocals for countless songs in the BEMANI Series, making them no strangers to fans of the series. In this issue Noria, Lisa Sotohana, and Miharu Arisawa drew us some pictures!



BeForU III

~Breaking Into The probability Changes~

Product No. : AVCA 26226

Retail Price: ¥3,150

Release Date: March 14

Miharu Arisawa

plays pop'n music

This lucky member is also a pop'n fan who takes the game seriously. She wears casual clothes for every day, keeping her hair up for her. She likes to play the game character and big.



Noria

plays pop'n music

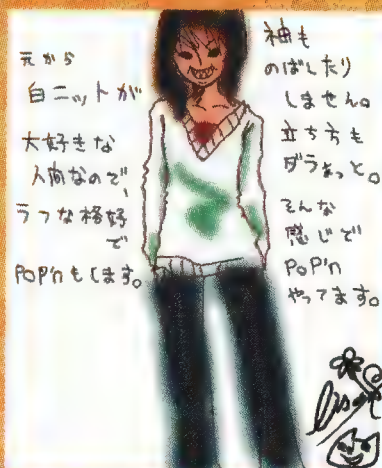
This animal member has been with the unit since they started. She likes to play the game character and big. She likes to play the game character and big. She likes to play the game character and big.



Lisa Sotohana

plays pop'n music

The youngest member of the bunch, the cool Lisa, challenges pop'n in casual attire. It's part of her style to play in her white knitted top and blue jeans.



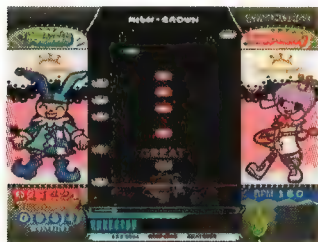
pop'n music!

pop'n music 13 carnival

**What's pop'n music?
A pop music game
that's easy to get
hooked on!**

In 1997, a strange game machine utilizing a keyboard and turntables debuted in game centers all over Japan. You play the keyboard and turntables in synch with the music as notes scroll across the screen. This game, "beatmania," established a new genre of music simulation games. It was the start of a new era in gaming. After that, the BEMANI Series released various games such as "GUITARFREAKS" and "drummania" which utilize musical instruments, and "Dance Dance Revolution" where you dance to the game. You could play these at arcades of course, but could also enjoy them in the home on the Playstation and PS2 systems.

In 1998, "pop'n music" from



Push the 9 buttons in synch with the notes scrolling across the screen.

KONAMI's acclaimed BEMANI Series debuted in game centers. "beatmania" had gamers playing to techno, reggae, and hip-hop music giving the game a cool image, but "pop'n music," featured cute pop songs just like the name suggests. From rock and pop to anime songs, "pop'n music" has a wide variety of music. Since 1998 there have been 14 different "pop'n music" titles to play in arcades across Japan and 25 titles exist for the personal game systems Playstation, PS2, Dreamcast, and Game Boy Color, making it a widely popular game. In late April 2007, "15 ADVENTURE" is slated to launch in arcades and "Pop'n music 14 FEVER!" will be released for the PS2 in summer 2007. With 9 colorful buttons to hit in time with the music, this game isn't just popular with gamers but is loved by a wide variety of people, even young girls. Although 9 buttons might seem intimidating, you can reduce the number of buttons you use to play, or share them as you play with a friend, so people who aren't game maniacs will not miss out on the fun!

**What is "pop'n music 13
carnival!?"
Enjoy an evolved pop'n**

The most recent title in the "pop'n



The newest release to home game systems, "pop'n music 13 carnival." The pop-style illustrations are so fun!

music" series was released September 28th 2006 and called "pop'n music 13 carnival" (PS2, ¥6,980, tax not included). The attraction of the edition is the recorded songs. Containing over 100 songs, including newly composed songs and songs by famous artists that appeared in the arcade version. This version includes theme songs to anime such as *Dragon Ball* and *City Hunter*. The PS2 version features new songs such as the theme to the hit movie *Kill Bill* among others. Also included are over 100 of the charming pop'n characters and many hidden songs you can unlock after advancing in the game. You can really get into the game with various levels of action. If you're new to the pop'n series, don't fret, as the system of "pop'n music 13

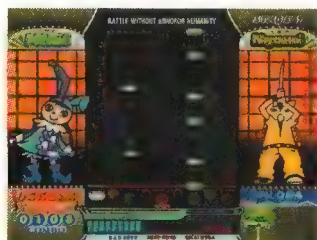


First-timers can also have fun with the simple system of "enjoy mode."

carnival" is easy for beginners to pick up. If you start in "enjoy mode" you will get instructions on how to play and advice on how you did afterward. Also, "enjoy mode" has special songs with a low level of difficulty so first-timers are able to enjoy pop'n too. In addition, you can play the songs chosen by fan voters in "pop'n request mode" which contains various mini-games. "pop'n music 13 carnival" is definitely full of things to satisfy everyone!



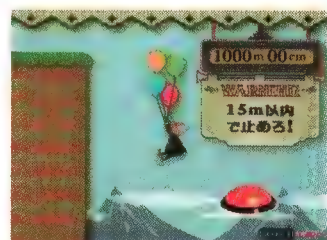
Title: pop'n music 13 carnival
Maker: KONAMI
Platform: Playstation 2
Genre: Music simulation
Release date: Available now
(Japan only)
Price: ¥6,980 (tax not included)



Popular songs are included, from anime and movies such as *Kill Bill*.



Songs requested by the fans are also included in this special genre.



You can enjoy the simple and fun built-in mini-games.

CUTTING EDGE

MOONLIGHT MILE 1st season -Lift off-

©MOONLIGHT MILE ©Yasuo Ohtagaki/Shogakukan.inc., MOONLIGHT MILE Film Partners

Mankind's everlasting craving...

Outgoing and mechanically-minded Goro Saruwatari and the cool and collected Navy pilot Jack F. Woodbridge are best friends with polar opposite personalities. At the young age of 22, they are mountain-climbing partners who have conquered the highest peaks of the 5 continents. When they reach the peak of Mt. Everest, the two look up and discover an international space station floating high above them. Soon after, it is announced that a resource probe satellite has discovered a next-generation energy source known as Helium 3 in large quantities on the moon. What connection will these 2 events have with the fate of the 2 best friends?



Broadcast platform: BS	Broadcasting office: WOWOW
Time slot & day: Every Sat. 01:00-01:30AM, 30-minute program	Production Company: Studio Hibari



REIDEEN

©2007 TOHOKUSHINSHA · Production I.G

The brave Reideen descends upon Earth!

One day, high school student Junki Saiga receives a sudden call on his cell phone. He learns the remains of his father Takumi, an archaeologist who disappeared 10 years before in Miyanobe village, have been found near the excavation site of Mt. Kurokami. Junki heads to the discovery location with his mother and sister, but upon reaching the spot, he loses consciousness and dreams about a golden shining giant. When he awakes, there is a bracelet in his hand. And what had once been an ordinary and uneventful life makes a sudden and dramatic transformation.

Broadcast platform: BS	Broadcasting office: WOWOW
Time slot & day: Every Sat. 07:00-07:30PM, 30-minute program	Production Companies: Tohokushinsha Film Corporation, Production I.G

Dinosaur King - D Kids Adventure

©SEGA/Sunrise, Nagoya Broadcasting Network

The battle that engulfs the dinosaurs scattered throughout Earth

A young dinosaur-loving elementary school student named Ryuta Kodai witnesses a meteorite fall. He follows it with his friends and they meet a real live triceratops. But their astonishment is cut short as the 3 are then chased by the dinosaur! During the pursuit, Ryuta touches the lithograph he found at the sight of impact and, for some reason, the triceratops turns small and cute and becomes emotionally attached to him. Ryuta, who had been longing for a pet, calls the triceratops that tries to eat everything "Gabu" and keeps him in secret at home...



Broadcast platform: TV	Broadcasting office: TV Asahi Group
Time slot & day: Every Sun. 07:00-07:30AM, 30-minute program	Production Company: Me~Tere / ADK / SUNRISE

Catch up with the latest anime to hit the screen!

Like our main feature in this issue, many titles over countless genres are being made into anime these days. In this corner we wish to bring you information on the newest anime series' airing in Japan!

Yes! Pretty Cure 5

©Toei Animation. All Rights Reserved

Nozomi Yumehara is a student at Cinqs Lumières Middle School who discovers a mysterious book in the library called the Dream Collet. Upon this discovery, she encounters Coco from the Palmier kingdom. Coco has been constantly searching for the Dream Collet for its ability to grant any one wish. His motives for this are to restore his hometown destroyed by the evil organization known as Nightmare. Nozomi decides to help Coco, and with her 4 friends hunt down the 55 pinkies which are necessary to make the wish. While doing so, they battle with Nightmare, who are also after the Dream Collet.

For the first time in the history of the series, a 5-member Pretty Cure!



Broadcast platform: TV

Broadcasting office: ABC, TV Asahi Group

Time slot & day: Every Sun. 08:30-09:00AM, 30-minute program

Production Company: ABC / ADK / Toei Animation

Juusou Kikou - Dancouga Nova

©2007SHINOBU FUJIWARA / Ashiroduction • DANCUGA NOVA Project

A masterpiece resurrected!

A new TV anime series based on *Dancouga - Super Beast Machine God* which was originally broadcast in 1985. It is the 22nd century and the Earth has been spared from large-scale world conflict. But war has by no means ceased to exist. It is at this time Dancouga Nova appears, a gigantic robot that always assists the outnumbered side in small-scale wars. His robust existence is praised as a god, but within Dancouga Nova lies a hidden secret...

Broadcast platform: CS

Broadcasting office: Animax

Time slot & day: Every Thu. 10:30-11:00PM, 30-minute program

Production Company: Ashi Production Corporation

Rocket Girl

©野尻抱介・むっちりむうにい／富士見書房／ハビネット

Off to space to visit Dad!

The space development organization known as Solomon Space Association (SSA) is riddled with problems as they plan Japan's first manned rocket launch. Meeting frequent setbacks, the head of the program Isao Nasuda is notified by the Japanese government that if he makes another mistake, the project will be terminated. Nasuda decides to launch the tried and true old-type LS-5 rockets in place of the chronically troublesome new-type LS-7, unexpectedly pulling ordinary high school girl Yukari Morita into the vortex of the enormous project.

Broadcast platform: BS

Broadcasting office: WOWOW

Time slot & day: Every Wed. 00:00-00:30AM, 30-minute program

Production Company: Happinet



With the continued success of the series, you can now find REVOLTECH corners in every hobby shop in Japan. The force of REVOLTECH can be felt when looking at last year's figure sales ranking and popularity polls.

Continued from the...
released last month, we now see the appearance of the GR-2. Now you can complete the REVOLTECH set of the 2 who confront each other in the original...
y. What's more, the GR-1 comes with secret weapons (Rocket Bazooka + support arm) that are available as options. The action scene possibilities are endless.

Series No. 020
**Mobio Police PATLABOR
GRIFFON**

Height: 120mm
Moveable Parts: 45 in whole body
Revolving Joints: 14

The Griffon, known as the Black Labor, is finally going to be part of the REVOLTECH series in this highly anticipated launch! With the introduction of original moving parts, it's now possible to recreate the savage action from the animation. With a flight suit as a base, it is equipped with revolving joints and is movable in any way you can imagine. The degree of flexibility shows once more REVOLTECH's strength point.

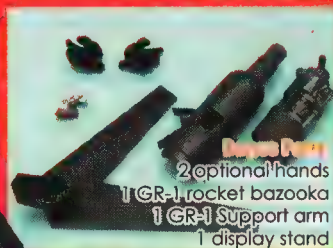
Series No. 018

GIA GIANT ROBO

The Day the Earth Stood Still

Giant Robo-2

Height: 120mm
Moveable Parts: 38 in whole body
Revolving joints: 12



Secret Parts

2 optional hands
1 TGR-1 rocket bazooka
1 GR-1 support arm
1 display stand



Secret Parts
3 optional hands
1 display base

Keroro Moves with you!

The Keroro Platoon series makes a comeback with revolver joints!!

All five of the cute and adorable characters from the Keroro Platoon are brought to life in this figure set. During the trial manufacture of the revolver joint in 2005, the set was released and the fan response was tremendous. Now, they are back!

The Keroro Platoon series had actually been using revolver joints (test version) prior to the release of the REVOLTECH series!




028 PORJNEO ポップジェネオ

The Japanese distributor is Organic.
©Mine Yoshizaki/Kadokawashoten, SUNRISE, TV TOKYO, NAS

Main Specs

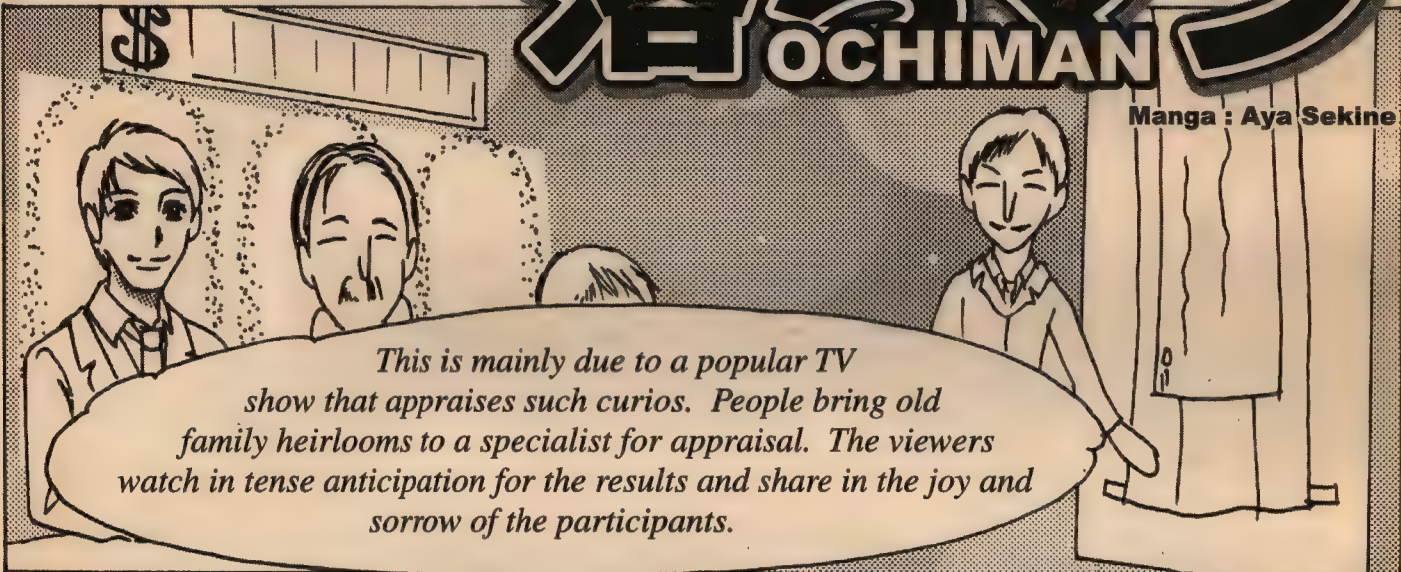
Height: 75mm
Revolving joints: 2
Model by: Katsuhisa Yamaguchi
Material: ABS / PVC




Japan is currently in the midst of
an antiques boom.

落ちマン OCHIMAN

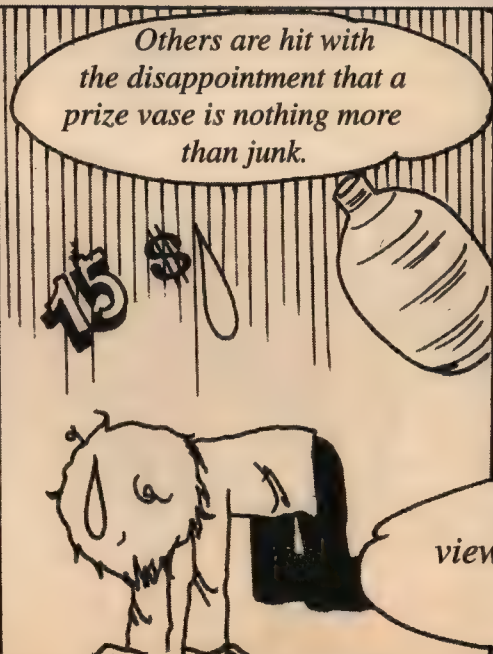
Manga : Aya Sekine




This is mainly due to a popular TV
show that appraises such curios. People bring old
family heirlooms to a specialist for appraisal. The viewers
watch in tense anticipation for the results and share in the joy and
sorrow of the participants.



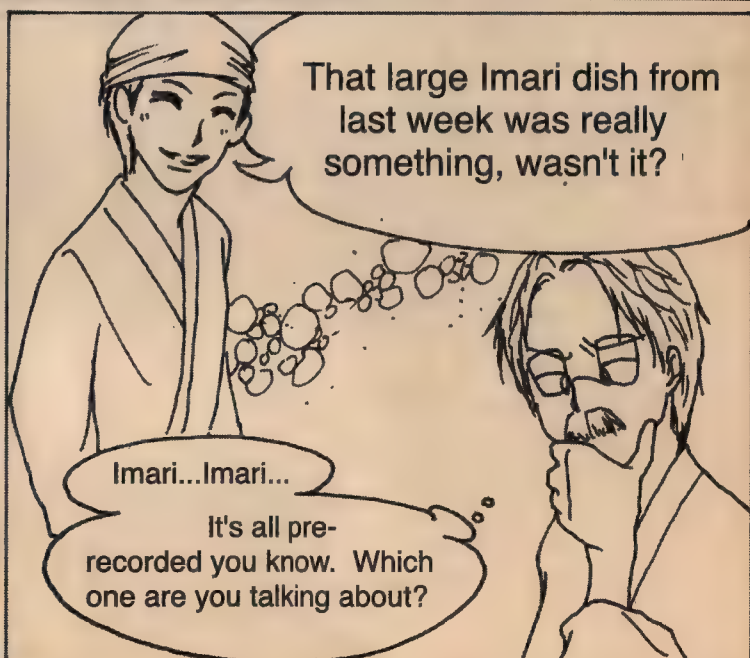
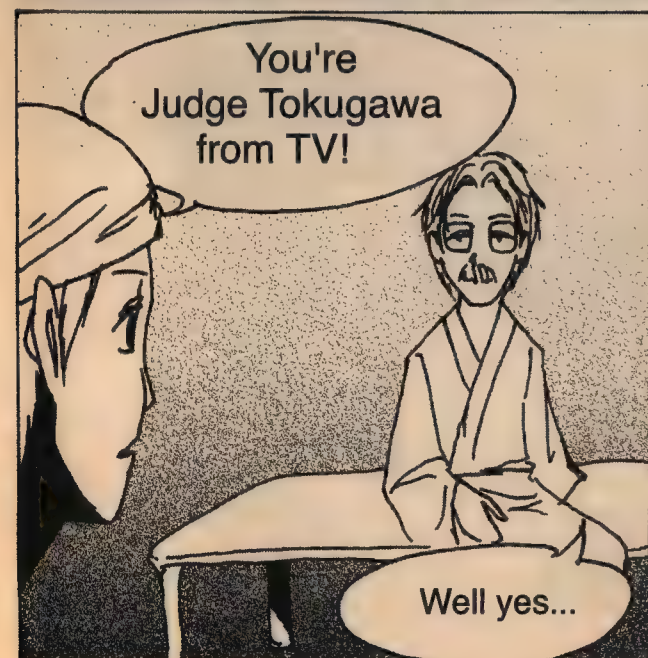
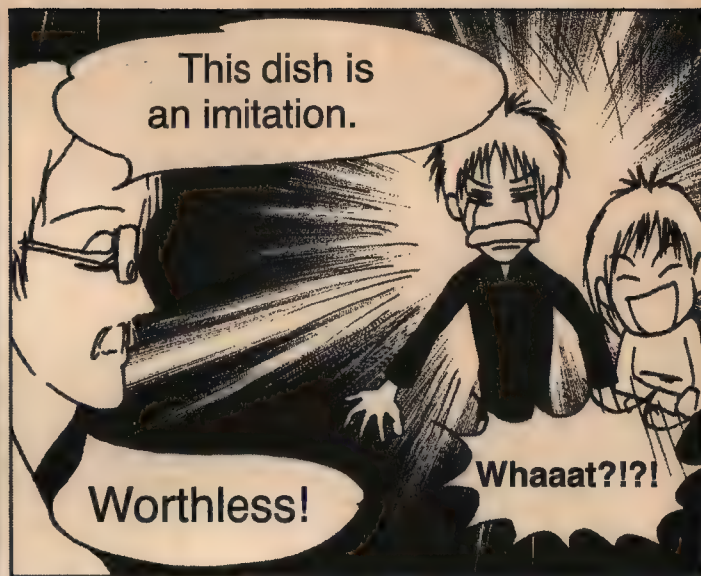
Some are
presented with the
pleasure of an unexpected
large sum of money.

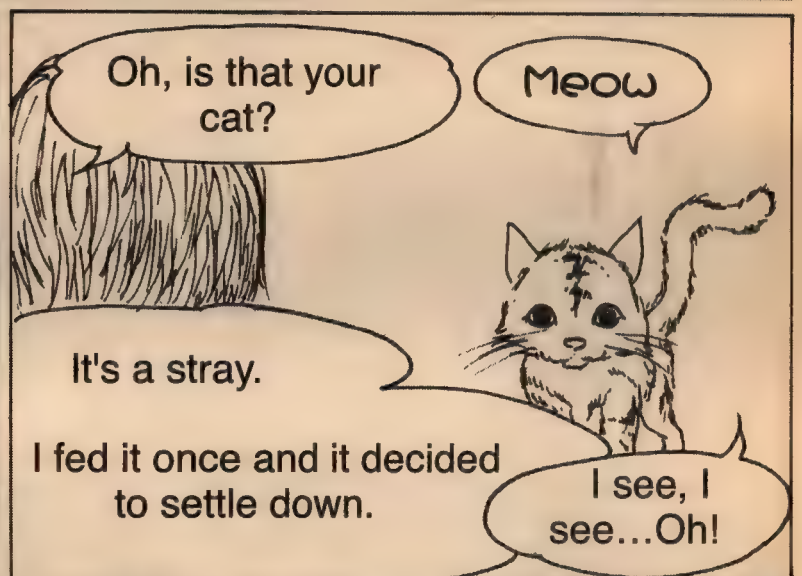


Others are hit with
the disappointment that a
prize vase is nothing more
than junk.



Every week the
viewers immensely enjoy
themselves.





There must be
some way to get
my hands on it...

Would you like
a refill?

Huh? Oh, uh,
yes please.

Hmmm...How should I go
about this....Ah, that's it!



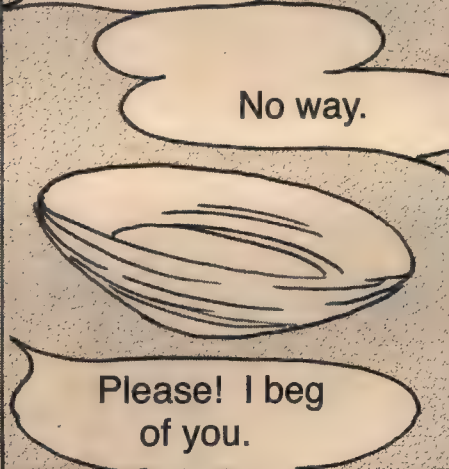
Do you like cats?



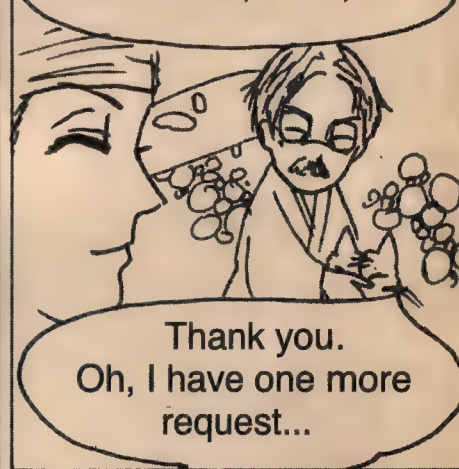
Err...would you sell
this cat to me?



How about for
50,000 yen?



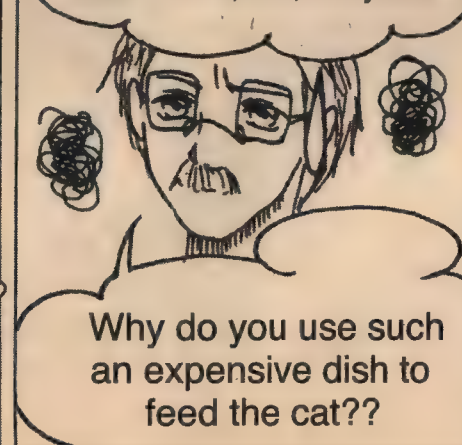
Well if you want it
that bad...Ok, for 50,000.



I need a dish to serve
the cat its food. Can
I have this one?



It's an ancient Korean
kingdom *umebachi*, worth no
less than 5,000,000 yen!



Cause with this dish, I
can sometimes sell
cats for 50,000 yen...





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JAPANESE ROCK FILE

VOL. 11

Before anything else, what comes to mind is the band name. What is the meaning behind Megamasso?

Ryohei: I chose it because of the beautiful ring to it. We had originally thought to choose a word with 4 characters and this particular word appealed to my aesthetic sense. I dislike applying deep meaning to words and sounds. For example, with books or paintings, the more complicated and complex it is artistically, the more interest it gains from the public. They will look at it and say "Wow, that seems difficult." For me, I prefer the opposite. I like it when things are straight and direct. Along these lines, I really don't care whether the name Megamasso is cooler than the Beatles or the Rolling Stones or not. More than this, I want people to feel the music.

So you're saying that without being influenced by the name or image of the band, you want people to judge it solely by its music?

Ryohei: Yes, that's why it could have been any name. A or I or Inzagi. The name Inzagi is also one I chose, but I think it doesn't matter whether it was Taro or Jiro.

Inzagi: Isn't Inzagi a lot different from Taro or

Jiro?

Ryohei: Who cares! (laughs) More than that, what matters is what kind of life the person leads. What kind of music did he play and leave in the annals of history? While expressing his band's world, how high did he go with his supporters? I had this conversation with all of the band members and asked everyone "Can you rise with me together?" This band is assembled only with people who answered "yes."

So Megamasso came to be by Ryohei assembling talented members with the intention of rising to the top?

Ryohei: Yes. When I left Ayabie and thought about what I wanted to do next, I sought members thinking I would be both the vocalist and guitarist. Meeting with a number of musicians, the first ones I met and thought "This is the guy!" were Yuta and Gou.

Yuta, please tell me what influenced you to join Megamasso.

Yuta: I don't know, just a sense, a feeling. I thought with this band, we could go to the top.

Ryohei: Yes, his feeling was really accurate. We've known each other for a long time. He was helping out with one of my old bands. The

reason I thought I wanted to do a band with Yuta is because he creates a nice groove. When you add programmed sounds, the groove goes kind of flat. I felt I needed a rhythm section that could keep the groove even with such programming. What's more, he's really motivated. What I looked for in members was diligence. Yuta is the most diligent in this band.

Yuta: You're embarrassing me... (shy laugh) But, well, I AM diligent!

Ryohei: There! You see! Now he's getting cocky. (laughs) He's only serious when it comes to the band. I didn't say he was always like that.

Well let's leave it at that. (laughs) What was your connection to Gou?

Ryohei: He was friends with Yuta.

Gou: Our hometowns are close by. We've known each other a long time, and are really comfortable with one other.

Yuta: Sometimes I wish he wasn't quite so comfortable. He is younger than me. (laughs)

Ryohei: I told Yuta to introduce me to someone young whose talent seemed about to bloom. I have many songs where the bass line moves around a lot. He has a technique that

It's ex-Ayabie guitarist Ryohei's new band, Megamasso! With CD releases and their first live appearance being a oneman at Shibuya O-East, the band is unmistakably becoming the eye of the typhoon in the visual scene.



Vo. Inzagi

corresponds with this. He's still young, so I'm looking forward to a big transformation in him. If the rhythm section is solid, it frees up the other parts of the band. As for his character, while Yuta is the serious and heated type, Gou is more cool. That coolness holds a conspicuous color among the 4 of us.

Well there's one more distinct character, the most enigmatic member...

Inzagi: Who, me?!

Yes. (laughs) For starters, your name!

Ryohei: After meeting the other 2 members, an acquaintance introduced us. He hadn't played in the visual kei scene before, but when I heard his songs, they were really great...

Inzagi: (without a second's pause) Why thank you!

Ryohei: What a quick response. (laughs) But he was really great and I thought, let's get this guy! I want you to feel the lyrics I wrote and projected from his voice soak into your skin during the live performance. I believe live shows are truly essential. I want Yuta and Gou to feel the energy of the crowd and the other members, and grow. I guess you can say it's also a way for me to pressure them by saying that. (laughs) Gou-kun hates practicing.

Gou: (laughs) No, that isn't true!

I can feel the tension here. (laughs) But that's what you need to do to see results.

Ryohei: Exactly! His technique is sufficient

but it's like, is it ever ok to be satisfied with your current level? I want him to exceed whatever it is I bring to him. I think that's what makes being in a band fun. I want to grow while communicating with the other members.

How do you other members feel about Ryohei? Both musically and personally.

Gou: At first, he came to see a show I played with my old band. It was after that he invited me to join. From my perspective, he's an amazing person.

Ryohei: Oh! Really? (laughs)

Gou: Yeah! When someone like him makes you an offer, you can't turn it down.

Yuta: I've been helping out for a long time, but the reason for doing so is of course his songs. I like his songs and, as a person, he's on the same wavelength I am.

Inzagi: I was drawn into the Peko world. The most impressive thing is the creation of the atmosphere. It's amazing how he has a story inside him which he then puts in the shape of music... that he has the power of imagination to do so.

In other words, the image continues to grow based on the listeners' sense.

Inzagi: Yes, that's right. I think it's great how one can enjoy music in that way. I simply felt "I like it!" and I soon gave my reply.

Ryohei: I was surprised! On the night of the day we first met, he replied by text mail. (laughs)

Songs help stimulate a listener's imagination, while at the same time allowing them to freely interpret its meaning. Ryohei, are you conscious of this when writing songs?

Ryohei: Sure. Like it's normal to make easy-to-listen-to songs with the pattern verse1-verse2-chorus, but now I'm going in the direction of a more complex structure. Like decreasing some of the melodic sections and just letting the listener hear the rhythm. Even in a flat song where you're not sure where the chorus is, if you can create an accent with the drum pattern, bass line, guitar playing, or the vocal's scream, then I think it's catchy music. Even if it's hardcore, death metal, or grind core.

When listening, something catches your ear... Catchiness meaning "easy to grasp." I think I get it.

Ryohei: As another example, you have the new metal gods like KORN and such. Those who listen to pop music may not think so. I don't think the melodies are catchy, but I find the riffs and the rhythm extremely catchy. Utilizing such techniques, I make music that also uses rhythm changes like in old classical music and progressive rock, rhythm that can be enjoyed by people who like visual kei. I believe it's vital for Megamasso to pursue this type of music.



Ryohei



Gou



Yuta

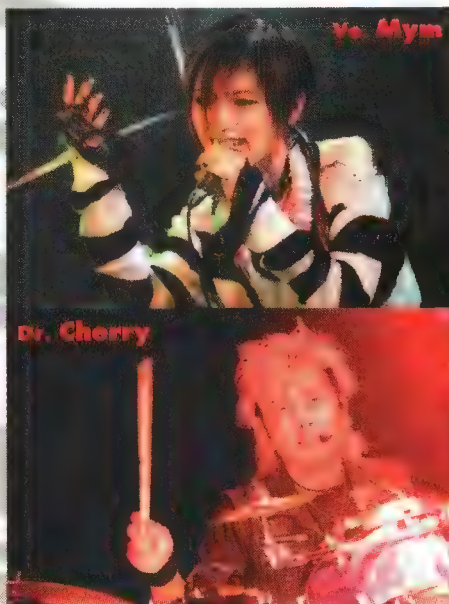
GaGaalinG

February 17th saw GaGaalinG in their 2nd ever oneman concert held at Shibuya Ruido-K2. Their first show of 2007, it was full of energy and momentum, and appropriately kicked off the new year!

Despite the cold rain that chilled the Tokyo night, Shibuya Ruido-K2 was packed with loyal GaGaalinG fans and supporters. As we all waited for the show to begin, the GaGaalinG logo could be seen rotating on a screen that concealed the stage. A pre-recorded beat then rang out through the venue and the screen rose up as the 3 band members took their positions onstage to the audience's screams and applause. With vocalist Mym in the center, drummer Cherry set up on the left of the stage, and guitarist MOTO G3 positioned on the right, the band then broke into the first number of the night, "Endless Love." An upbeat pop melody,

it had the fans pumping their fists into the air as images of the band were projected both behind the stage and on the right wall of the venue. GaGaalinG's sound can be described as a fusion of Jpop and Jrock. The catchy melodies are all sung in Mym's cute, high-pitched singing voice, layered on guitar-based tracks, backed by rock veteran Masanori "Cherry" Koyanagi's solid drum beats. Vocalist Mym's appearance is also worth noting as she is always decked out in the latest Harajuku fashion, this time wearing a black and white striped h.NAOTO sweater and knee-high boots coming just shy of her miniskirt. Highlights of the night included "too fast too live, too fast to die," a song Mym explained was dedicated to a late aunt who taught her

how to make origami birds as a child. Her emotionally charged lyrics resonated throughout the venue, telling her aunt how she really felt. Another impressive moment came with their latest song "Shower," currently available for free download on mf247.com. A blue strobe light flashed over the images projected on the screens, and the smoke combined with blue and purple lighting to accent the band's forceful performance. All night long, the intimacy could be felt between the band and the crowd, whether through their powerful musical performance or the playful interaction during the emcee segments. This night marked the first of three consecutive monthly oneman shows, and we at POPJNEO look forward to the next two!



A site where you can get original CDs

cdjapan.co.jp

This time we visited
CDJapan.co.jp to check out the
total awesomeness in person!

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JAPAN CD
WEBSHOP**

Import the latest trends from
Japan with CDJapan.co.jp!

**Q. What kind of site is
CDJapan?**

A. A website where you can buy original editions of Japanese anime and Jpop CDs and DVDs. You can also pre-order soon-to-be-released anime DVDs and soundtrack CDs which will be shipped to you right on the release date. We have a huge lineup of music CDs and we guarantee you can find anything you're looking for, from major artists to indie bands. We have magazines on fashion, anime, games, and many more with over 120 titles you can even get a subscription to! We also carry punk and gothic fashion. It's definitely a valuable site for fans



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of Japanese pop culture! And we have gift certificates you can send to your friends!

**Q. But I don't understand
Japanese...**

A. Don't worry! Our entire site is exclusively in English! Product details, bonus information, track listings, and buying procedures are all present in English and if you have any questions, we're here to support you in English as well.

**Over 300,000 titles!
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limited bonuses either!**

**Q. About how many items
are available at CDJapan?**

A. At present we have over 300,000 CD and DVD titles. You can also pre-order new releases, so the number is growing day by day.

**Q. What are the bonus items
given with the first-press of
a release?**

A. In Japan, limited edition items are given as a special bonus with the purchase of first-press releases. CDs and DVDs often have two presses, a "regular version" and a "limited version," and these bonus items are sometimes used to differentiate between the two. There are



Here they do everything from managing the stock to shipping the items.

many different things considered special bonuses. For example, variant jacket designs, variant CD label designs, posters, booklets, figurines, or even extra footage on a DVD-extra. As an example, the first-press of the Gackt CD released February 7th, *No ni saku hana no you ni*, came with a bonus DVD and piano score. On top of that, we threw in a special limited-edition poster for the first 140 lucky customers. The first-press DVD of the anime *Death Note* had a different character figurine for each

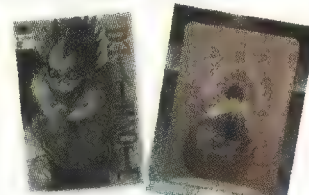
volume released. Volume 3 included an L figurine.

**Q. Won't the cases or items
get damaged during
shipment from Japan?**

A. We take a lot of care when packaging our items. All items are wrapped in bubble wrap and packed in a sturdy box which is also filled with a buffer cushion. If there's an extra bonus item, we change the box size to accommodate it. Since we offer many different kinds of bonuses, we also have many different-sized boxes on hand.



A CDJapan-only poster was given to the first 140 lucky customers.



The *Death Note* DVD with L figurine. It is rare and almost impossible to obtain.

cdjapan.co.jp

Major, Indie, Jpop, Visual
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COSPLAY JUNCTION

in JAPAN

Continuing with our theme from last month's JANIME Vol. 10, we have more cosplayers who participated in the JCF cosplay event held in Japan!



Name: 黒崎 夏夜 (left)

Character name: Axel (KINGDOM HEARTS II)

This ready-made costume looks cool, completely in black. She went through a lot of trouble to make her amazing wig.

Name: 飛騨つかさ (center left)

Character name: Riku (KINGDOM HEARTS II)

She is also wearing a pre-made costume. The blonde wig completes the look.

Name: カズイ (right)

Character name: Riku (KINGDOM HEARTS II)

Wearing an attention-grabbing blue wig, her costume is a so pre-made. The theme of her costume is "henlar".

Name: 飛騨つかさ (center right)

Character name: Riku (KINGDOM HEARTS II)

She went full out to look like her character, wearing this ready-made costume.



Name: 柳 夏夜 (left)

Character name: Ruka (DEATH NOTE)

She braved the cold weather to wear this costume, which she made herself. Her ponytails complete the look.

Name: 飛騨つかさ (center left)

Character name: Riku (KINGDOM HEARTS II)

This costume is made up of several ready-made pieces. The slim silhouette is quite striking.

Name: Raide (below right)

Character name: Raide (DEATH NOTE)

Raide assembled purchased items to create this costume. It's not visible in the picture, but the red compact is a great accessory!

Name: Ruka (below left)

Character name: Ruka (DEATH NOTE)

This all-white costume consists of pre-made pieces. The props add the finishing touch.

Name: 70 (below right)

Character name: L (DEATH NOTE)

Despite the winter temperatures she took her shoes off for us when we snapped this photo! The pose is perfect too.



Name: 夜野月乃 (left)

Character name: Sogo Okita (Gintama)

She pieced together several ready-made items for this cosplay, including the red-eye mask worn on her head. These three look cute in their matching mufflers.

Name: 二色啓助 (center)

Character name: Gintoki Sakata (Gintama)

Her costume is also made up of pieces she purchased. She looks lovely all in white, including the muffler.

Name: 夢見 (right)

Character name: Toshiko Hylketa (Gintama)

Wearing a handmade costume, she holds a bottle of mayonnaise. Most challenging to make was the vest.

Name: 相葉ノア (right)

Character name: Motenari Mour (Sengoku BASARA2)

This costume is handmade, right down to the props. Most difficult to make was apparently the chain mail, but her helmet also looks amazing.

Name: 神谷雪久 (left)

Character name: Shingen Takekura (Sengoku BASARA2)

Even from a distance her costume stands out. She even went to lengths to make a metal undershirt, not to mention the rest of the costume. The manly beard also wins her points.

Name: 奈々 (right)

Character name: Duo Maxwell (Mobile Suit Gundam Wing)

The pouches of this handmade costume took a lot of time to complete. Her long braid is just right.

Name: Mayu (below left)

Character name: Mayu (Mobile Suit Gundam Wing)

She looks like an old-fashioned school girl in her self-made costume. The frills look charming.

Name: 霜月蓮

Character name: Minamoto no Yoritada (Harakamari Toki no Naka de 2)

She worked hard especially when it came to making the skirt of her kimono, but her efforts certainly paid off!

Name:
舞都 (abura tō)

Character name:
Uryū Ishida (BLEACH)

Apparently, securing the fastener of this handmade costume so that it wasn't visible was a challenge. The glasses and cape add the finishing touches.

Name:
一花 (hana ichi)

Character name:
Hanatarō Yamane (BLEACH)

The finishing touches of this handmade costume, even if rough around the edges, were all completed by her.

Name: 日生 (arube center)

Character name: Ichigo Kurosaki (BLEACH)

When making her costume, creating the right shape was difficult, but it certainly turned out well in the end!

Name:
ERUMA (center center)

Character name: Eruma (BLEACH)

This costume is a combination of handmade and ready-made pieces. Getting the obi to be the right length and making the hair ornament took a lot of work.

Name: 久慈かな (hisagi kana)

Character name: Kana (Higurashi no Naku Koro ni)

A first-time effort at costume-making, Kana fumbled at times, but managed to complete this kimono herself. She did a great job.

Name: 麻里 (maru)

Character name: Maki (Higurashi no Naku Koro ni)

Pleasing to the eye with its pastel colors, this costume was made completely by hand. Though it was most difficult to get the sizing right, it looks great, especially the decorations on the kimono.

Name: 貴子 (kiko)

Character name: Kikyo (Higurashi no Naku Koro ni)

Her wonderful black hair looks great together with this handmade costume. Due to the cold winter weather, she added a scarf to her costume.

Name:
Ginta MAX (center)

Character name: Ginta (BLEACH)

She paired a kimono purchased at an ordinary kimono shop with a coat, which her friend made for her. A bit of sex appeal tops it all off.

Name:
Namiko (center)

Character name: Shinpachi Shimura (Gintama)

Creating the skirt of the kimono on this handmade costume was a challenge. Along with her friends, she added a winter muffler for warmth.

Name: 日向 (hina)

Character name: Hinamori (BLEACH)

She put a lot of work into the details of her self-made costume, like the military banding. She's even got the perfect glasses to make this cosplay effort complete.

Name:
戒★璃 (kai-ri)

Character name: Izuru Kira (BLEACH)

This costume was made by hand. She put a lot of effort into making the skirt, but it's her shoulder length fringe that grabs our attention.

Name: 海月 (kai)

Character name: Aislinn (The Sims 3)

Her large sword makes for a big impact. This costume was made entirely by hand and the armor took a lot of work. She made the look complete by wearing a beard.

Name: 曹 (cao)

Character name: Cao Cao (The Three Kingdoms)

Wearing this impressive handmade costume, she creates a striking presence, looking authentic from head to toe!

Name: YUZU (left)

Character name: Yuzu (The Sims 3)

She made improvements on this costume which was originally made by someone else. She holds a ball to enhance the mischievous image of her character.

Name: 四季 (right)

Character name: Sting Oakley (MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM SEED DESTINY)

From her hair down to the gun she holds, she paid attention to detail. She went through great pains to perfectly line up the pattern on both sides of her handmade costume.

Name: 奈奈 (nana)

Character name: Nana (The Sims 3)

She looks adorable in this children's coat, which was arranged into a costume. Even her umbrella, bought in Asakusa, is cute.

Name: RINGO (center)

Character name: Stelia Loussier (MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM SEED DESTINY)

Playing the only female in this group, she did a great job of looking like her character through the use of make-up.



ORGANIC PRESENTS

THIS MONTH WE FEATURE FIGURES FROM PROMINENT MAKER ORGANIC!!

ALICE L. MALVIN

HEIGHT: APPROX. 20CM

Heroine of hit manga *Pumpkin Scissors*. She brandishes a double-bladed sword which is also featured with this figure.

Model by: Hiroshi Morikawa (GALATEA)/Amie-Grand
Material: ATBC-PVC, ABS
©2006 Ryotaro Iwanaga/Kodansha/Izumi Project

ARIKA YUMEMIYA

HEIGHT: APPROX. 22CM

Meet the heroine of the anime *Mai Otome*, Arika Yumemiya, and her adversary, Nina Wong. This anime hit airwaves in September 2005.

Model by: Koichi Katsushima (MINE)
Material: ATBV-PVC, ABS
©Sunrise

NINA WONG

HEIGHT: APPROX. 21CM

HURRICANE CLEO

HEIGHT: APPROX. 18CM

The main character of *Glass Fleet* which aired in 2006. This figure captures the pose of the character deep in battle and full of style.

Model by: Hill Saito
Production: Takumi Koubo
Material: ATBC-PVC, ABS
©2006 GONZO/Glass Fleet Production Committee

ROSE ANDERSON

HEIGHT: APPROX. 18CM

A character from *Solty Rei* which started airing in October 2005. This figure was molded realistically based on the new illustrations by original animation director Shizilow.HA.

Model by: Koichi Katsushima (MINE)
Material: ATBV-PVC
©2005 Shizilow.HA/GONZO/Solty Rock Project

Look for these fine figures from your local retailer

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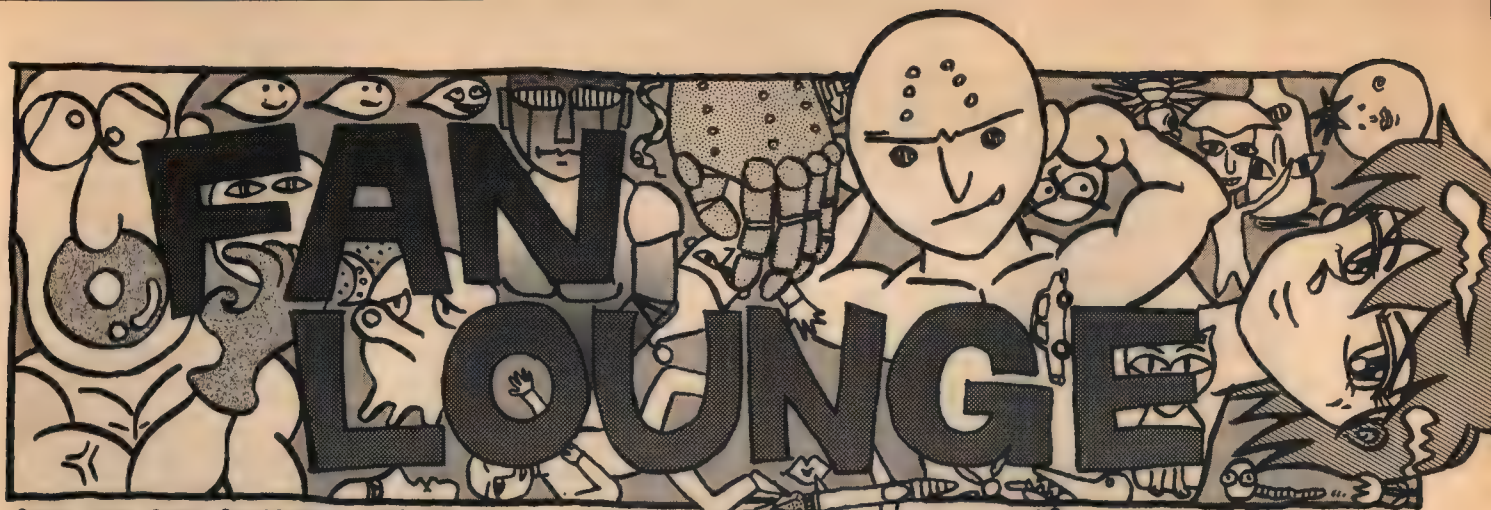
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dloyz

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POPJNEO's Fan Lounge launches!!

Introduction to the Fan Lounge system

Every time your submission is published, your comments and ideas will be judged and scored.

@\$%-WHOA!!-%\$@	5pts
Wow!	3pts
Oh, ok!	1pt

The person who accumulates the highest number of points will be crowned the champion. The winner will be awarded a special gift by the editorial team!

The gift will be announced right before we tally up the points! There are 3 winning spots to be filled! It doesn't matter which corner you submit to, as all the points will add up. We are looking forward to your submissions!!!

Presents please!

CORNER 1

I want this and this, and this too.

Tell us what you would like to have from premium goods, to inexpensive goods, limited items and super-classy items.

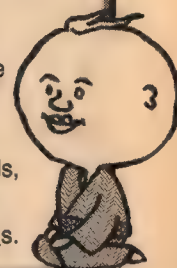


Photo corner!

CORNER 2

Send us photos of all sorts!

- ★Anime character look-alikes
- ★Screenshots of the final scene from a retarded game (games no one would play!)
- ★Cosplay photos
- ★Your most precious things
- ★Funny photos of things you see on the street
- ★Your funniest facial expression
- ...etc.

I wouldn't want a friend like this!

CORNER 3

Impossible but interesting people.

Yet you would not want to be friends with them.

Got someone in mind?

- ★Someone with an emoticon face
- ★A person with rubber hands that stretches
- ★Real-life Mickey Mouse (man-size)
- ★A 2D person



Easy to sing Japanese karaoke songs

CORNER 4

You can send in one or as many as you want.

Make sure to send both the song title and artist!

Illustrations Wanted!

CORNER 5

You can also send in your original manga.

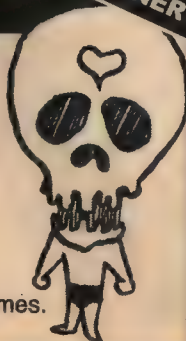
My worst 5

CORNER 6

Tell us the top 5 on your list of the WORST from Japan

- ★Terrible video games
- ★Bad anime
- ★Bad manga
- ★Bad movies
- ★Weird songs (including artist names)
- ★Awful-tasting Japanese snacks ...etc.

You can send in as many top 5 lists as you want as long as they are about different themes.



投稿法伝授の巻

How to Submit

Please send in your submissions via the POPJNEO webpage.

Fill out the form online and send away.

You can also mail us your submissions to the address below:

[POBOX 13894 Torrance CA 90503]

JAPAN TOP 10



MANGA RANKING

On this page we list the most popular manga in the industry based on reports from manga distributors nationwide. Take a look at the ranking and try to get your hands on some of the manga you've never seen or heard of before!

Top 10 for January 30 (courtesy of Tohan)

Available
in America

No.1	Fruits Basket (9) フルーツバスケット (9) Natsuki Takaya	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No.2	Tenjo Tenge (16) 天上天下 (16) Oh!Great	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No.3	Kimini Todoke (3) 君に届け (3) Karuho Shiina	<input type="checkbox"/>
No.4	Ookiku Furikabutte (7) おおきく振りかぶって (7) Asa Higuchi	<input type="checkbox"/>
No.5	I'll Give You My First Love (6) 僕の初恋をキミに捧ぐ (6) Kotomi Aoki	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No.6	Zipang (27) シバング (27) Kaiji Kawaguchi	<input type="checkbox"/>
No.7	Soul Eater (8) ソウルイーター (8) Atsushi Ohkubo	<input type="checkbox"/>
No.8	Case Closed (56) 名探偵コナン (56) Gôshô Aoyama	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No.9	Negima! (17) 魔法先生ネギま! (17) Ken Akamatsu	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No.10	Air Gear (16) エア・ギア (16) Oh!Great	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Top 10 for February 14 (courtesy of Tohan)

Available
in America

No.1	BLEACH (26) BLEACH・ブリーチ (26) Tite Kubo	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No.2	D.Gray-man (10) D.Gray-man (10) Katsura Hoshino	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No.3	EYESHIELD21 (23) アイシールド21 (23) Riichiro Inagaki (story) / Yusuke Murata (art)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No.4	Kaichou wa Maid-sama! (2) 会長はメイド様! (2) Hiro Fujiwara	<input type="checkbox"/>
No.5	Dr. Koto's Clinic (21) Dr.コトー診療所 (21) Takatoshi Yamada	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No.6	PIEW TO FUKU! JAGUAR (12) ビューと吹く! ジャガー (12) Kyosuke Usuta	<input type="checkbox"/>
No.7	Natsume Yuujin-cho (3) 夏目友人帳 (3) Yuki Midorikawa	<input type="checkbox"/>
No.8	Sengoku (12) センゴク (12) Hideki Miyashita	<input type="checkbox"/>
No.9	Hanma Baki (6) 範馬刃牙 (6) Keisuke Itagaki	<input type="checkbox"/>
No.10	ToLOVE-ru Trouble (2) ToLOVEる -とらぶる- (2) Saki Hasemi (story) / Kentaro Yabuki (art)	<input type="checkbox"/>

January
Close-up

Fruits Basket

The story is approaching its climax!!

©Natsuki Takaya 2007



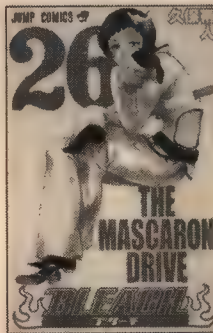
Much time has lapsed since our protagonist Tohru Honda, who lived in a tent, moved in with the Soumas. The members of the Souma family are bound to the curse of the Jyunishi (12-Animal Chinese Zodiac), their future lying in shackles. Slowly the curse is being lifted, causing Akito, a member of the Souma family to go out of control. One by one the Soumas are being relieved of this curse, bringing new changes to their lives.

February
Close-up

BLEACH

You can't take your eyes off the battle!

©2001 by Tite Kubo/SHUEISHA Inc.



In preparation for the battle against Aizen, who is conspiring the construction of the Royal Key (*ouken*), Ichigo, Sado and Ishida are pushing their way through a vigorous and grueling training. Slowly but surely, they are growing stronger. Time is running out before the full awakening of the Orb of Distortion. However, the emergence of an Arrancar changes everything for Ichigo and his comrades! Check out Volume 26 of this series as complications and trouble unfold!!

ANIME and MANGA
Store ADS Wanted!!!

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AMERICAN
convention
March 23, 2007
- April 29, 2007
information

Anime Detour ★ DATE March 23-25, 2007 CITY Bloomington, MN
WEBSITE <http://www.animatedetour.com/>

Culture Shock ★ DATE March 23-25, 2007 CITY Farmington, ME
WEBSITE <http://studentorgs.umf.maine.edu/~otakuclub/>

I-Con ★ DATE March 23-25, 2007 CITY Stony Brook, NY
WEBSITE <http://www.icons1.org/>

Anime Punch! DATE March 30 - April 1, 2007 CITY Columbus, OH
WEBSITE <http://www.animepunch.org/>

Conbust DATE March 30 - April 1, 2007 CITY Northampton, MA
WEBSITE <http://sophia.smith.edu/conbust/>

Chibi Fest DATE March 31, 2007 CITY Las Vegas, NV
WEBSITE <http://chibifest.com/>

AniZona ★ DATE April 5-8, 2007 CITY Mesa, AZ
WEBSITE <http://www.anizona.org/>

Sakura-Con ★ DATE April 6-8, 2007 CITY Seattle, WA
WEBSITE <http://www.sakuracon.org/>

POPJNEO will be distributed at all conventions marked with a ★! Be sure to pick up a copy!

Tales of Anime ★ DATE April 6-8, 2007 CITY San Mateo, CA
WEBSITE <http://www.talesofanime.com/>

Anime Supercon ★ DATE April 13-15, 2007 CITY Ft. Lauderdale, FL
WEBSITE <http://www.animesupercon.com/>

Middle Tennessee Anime Convention ★ DATE April 13-15, 2007 CITY Nashville, TN
WEBSITE <http://www.mtac.net/>

Tekkoshoccon ★ DATE April 13-15, 2007 CITY Monroeville, PA
WEBSITE <http://www.tekkoshoccon.com/>

Animarathon ★ DATE April 14, 2007 CITY Bowling Green, OH
WEBSITE <http://www.bgsu.edu/studentlife/organizations/anime/animarathon/>

O-Conn ★ DATE April 14, 2007 CITY Helotes, TX
WEBSITE <http://www.o-conn.org/>

Save-Kon DATE April 14-15, 2007 CITY Stephenville, TX
WEBSITE <http://www.tarleton.edu/~savekon/>

Anime Boston ★ DATE April 20-22, 2007 CITY Boston, MA
WEBSITE <http://www.animeboston.com/>

Anime St. Louis ★ DATE April 20-22, 2007 CITY St. Louis, MO
WEBSITE <http://animestl.tripod.com/>

No Brand Con ★ DATE April 20-22, 2007 CITY Eau Claire, WI
WEBSITE <http://www.nobrandcon.com/>

Anime Matsuri ★ DATE April 27-29, 2007 CITY Houston, TX
WEBSITE <http://animematsuri.com/>



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AnimeNation <http://www.animenation.com/>
ANIMEniacs <http://www.animeniacs.com/>
ANIME V <http://www.animev.com>
Chibi A n J <http://www.chibianj.com>
claud213 <http://claud213.cjb.net/>
Cornell Japanese Animation Society <http://www.cjas.org/>
Gaijin USA <http://stores.ebay.com/GAIJIN-USA>
HOA Outlet <http://www.hoaoutlet.com/>
Anime to Skateboards <http://www.animetoskateboards.com/>
Otaku Gamer
Athens Anime <http://www.athensanime.com>
Kinokuniya Bookstore <http://www.kinokuniya.com>

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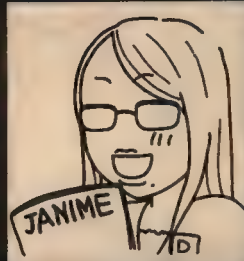
STAFF POSTSCRIPT



Did you enjoy the first issue of POPJNEO? We're gonna keep bringin' it on so don't miss an issue! Any supporting words, ideas, or requests that you have, please send them through the webpage! We also have a bunch of giveaways, so be sure to check out the site when you finish reading!



Nice to meet you, everyone! I'm K2, the designer for POPJNEO. With this new design, I was asked to write a postscript for the editor's column. We'd like to create a magazine for you guys to express your opinions, so we're waiting for your comments and suggestions!



Accompanying our new format, the contents are powered up a few levels! Thanks to that, I'm contributing to this editor's column this month. Every month we race to meet the deadlines with lots of great, new content for everyone to read, so please look forward to it!



Hey everyone! There's so much fabulous and funky fun just oozing out of Japan-land, ne? We're all doing our best meeting ridiculous deadlines to keep on bringin' it to ya. So tell us what you think and what you want to see more of. Give us a shout out on the website and thanks so much for your continued support!



Bringing you the latest Japanese pop culture, POPJNEO debuts! It's our mission to introduce you to various aspects of Japan. Tell us where it itches and we'll be more than happy to scratch it for you! Send us your comments via web or snail mail!!

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Winners for JANIME Vol.9! Thank you for all of your entries!! And congratulations to you lucky ones this month!

JANIME GOODS (10 people)

Brandon Phaly / AL Alexander / CA Lina / MD Kazu / CA Carl Coe / NC
JOSHUA LOPEZ / D.C. Jason Birzer / VA Silva Semvongsat / FL
Kevin Kinsler / NY Mi Yoen Lee / CA

Thank you for the many entries answering the quiz in JANIME Vol. 9!

The correct answer was "CHEVALIER." The names of the lucky winners appear below!
Serena Butler / PA Destiny Charelle Owen / GA Devon Peterson / CA Ashley Arturo / MA

Next Issue!! Set for release on April 20!

Main feature Fashion Trend Update

h.NAOTO SPECIAL FEATURE

TOKYO GIRLS COLLECTION REPORT & SNAP

J-TSUU

Harajuku Map

Tommy heavenly[®] × Nagi Noda Exhibition REPORT

JAPANESE TASTE

J-CUCINE J-SWEETS

COSPLAY JUNCTION



SUPER JAPANESE ANIMATION

Oedo Rocket Amazing Nuts!

GENIUS PARTY CUTTING EDGE

MANGA BIN

Sci-Fi Manga

JAPANESE ROCK FILE

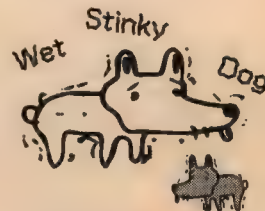
THE SAGA OF AKANE

OCHIMAN

HOT TOYS

Manga Ranking

...and more



*Please be informed due to unavoidable circumstances, listed contents may be amended without prior notification.

Vol.1 Reader Giveaway

The continuation of our 2-part special feature! We have lots of presents to give away!!

1 5 people  Pick set (sponsor: GaGaInG)	2 2 people  CD (sponsor: GaGaInG)	3 1 person  STUDIO4°C T-Shirt (sponsor: STUDIO4°C)		
4 1 person  STUDIO4°C CLUB T-Shirt (sponsor: STUDIO4°C)	5 3 people  BeForU autographed CD (sponsor: Music Crew)	6 5 people  BeForU autographed postcard (sponsor: avex entertainment)	7 5 people  BeForU autographed poster (sponsor: avex entertainment)	8 2 people  "Keitai Shoujo" Towel (sponsor: COSPA)
9 1 person  "Kiteretsu Daihyakka" Figure (sponsor: Kittyrights&Entertainment)	10 1 person  "Kiteretsu Daihyakka" Figure (sponsor: Kittyrights&Entertainment)	11 1 person  Postcard set (sponsor: Kittyrights&Entertainment)	12 1 person  "Maison Ikkoku" DVD (sponsor: Kittyrights&Entertainment)	13 1 person  "Maison Ikkoku" DVD (sponsor: Kittyrights&Entertainment)
14 3 people  "Chevalier" script (sponsor: Production I.G)	15 1 person  Haruka Shimotsuki "Tindaria no Tane" CD (sponsor: TEAM Entertainment)	16 1 person  Chata@Yoko Shimomura "murmur" CD (sponsor: TEAM Entertainment)	17 1 person  Sound Horizon "Shonen wa Ken wo..." CD (sponsor: TEAM Entertainment)	18 1 person  "Keitai Shoujo" sticky notes (sponsor: Keitai Shoujo)

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See an item that catches your eye? Enter to win now!!

It's easy to participate! Simply access the POPJNEO homepage and send us a completed questionnaire. Don't hesitate to enter!! You can up your chances of winning by filling in a lot of info on the questionnaire!

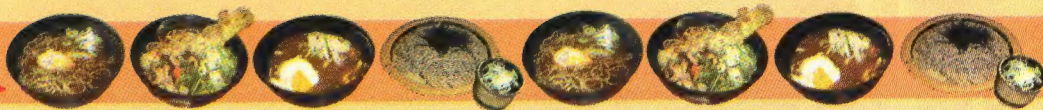
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I can also be part of POPJNEO?!

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**JAPANESE
TASTE**



EKI SOBA

This is Japanese
food culture!

J-CUISINE

Starting this issue, we present a new feature J-CUISINE! Our first introduction will be the eki soba (train station soba). In other words, soba you can eat standing in shops on the train platform. Since it takes little time to eat, it's perfect for people who are on the go and have no time to stop for meals.



The outside of the shop. Most people just eat quickly in the time it takes before the train comes, but it's also ok to take your time and eat leisurely.



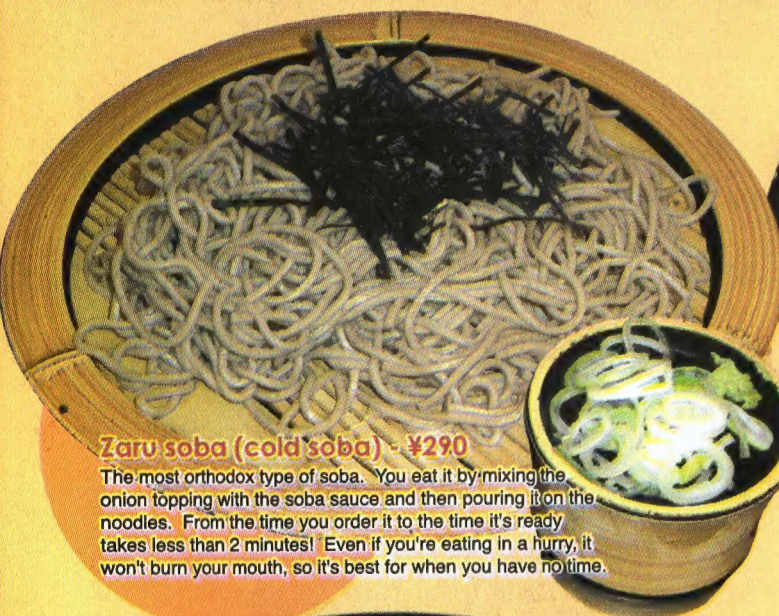
Before you enter, decide what you want to eat from the menu and buy a meal ticket from the vending machine. Then hand over the ticket to the shop employee and your order is complete.

Ajisai tea house Meguro branch

OPEN: weekdays 7:00-21:00

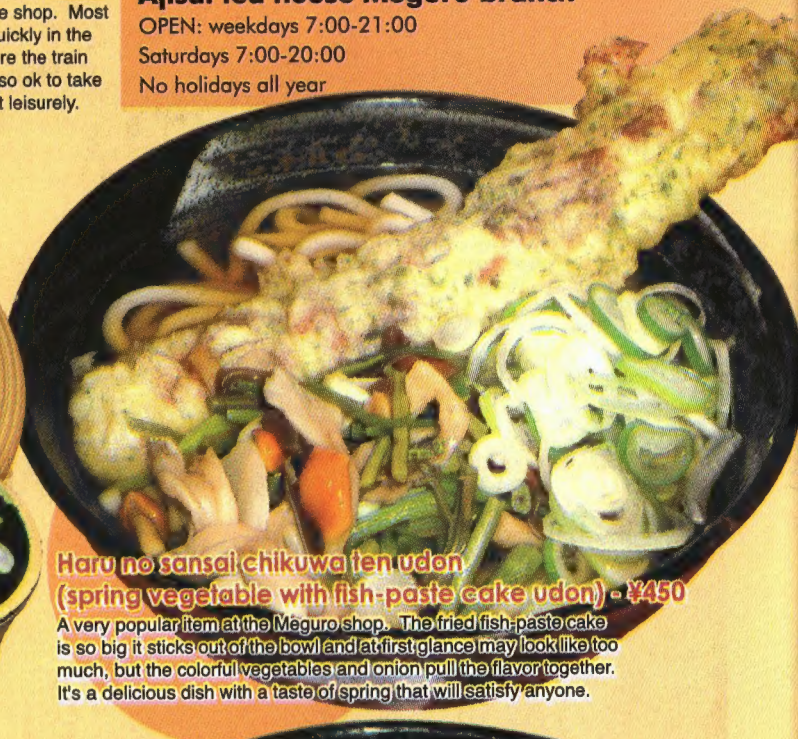
Saturdays 7:00-20:00

No holidays all year



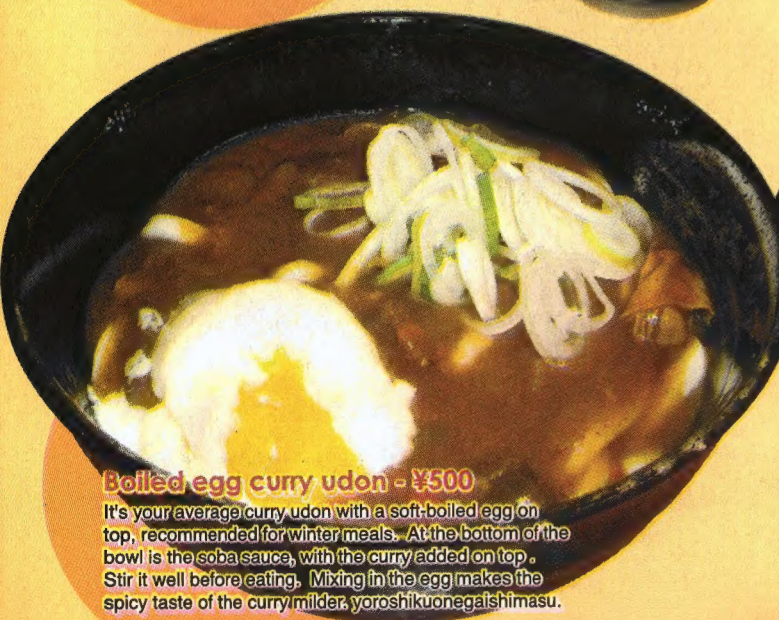
Zaru soba (cold soba) - ¥290

The most orthodox type of soba. You eat it by mixing the onion topping with the soba sauce and then pouring it on the noodles. From the time you order it to the time it's ready takes less than 2 minutes! Even if you're eating in a hurry, it won't burn your mouth, so it's best for when you have no time.



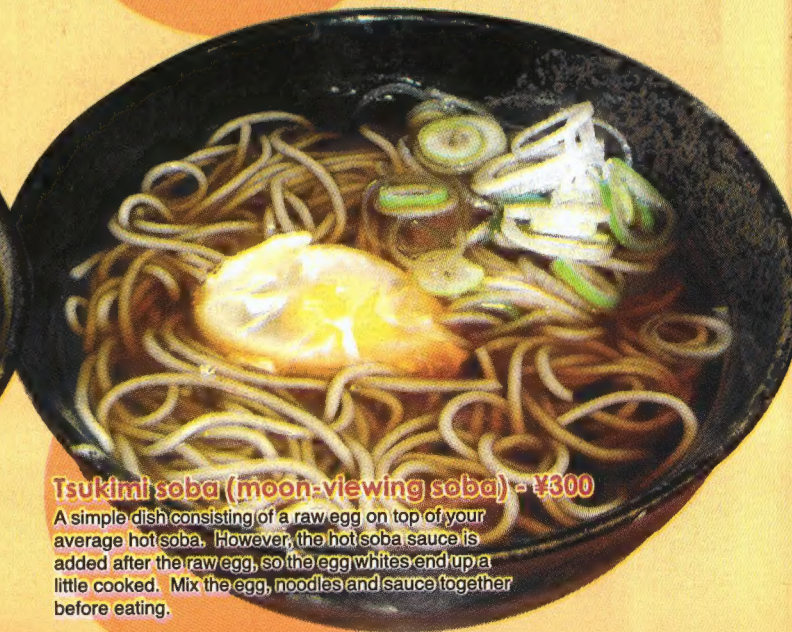
**Haru no sansai chikuwa ten udon
(spring vegetable with fish-paste cake udon) - ¥450**

A very popular item at the Meguro shop. The fried fish-paste cake is so big it sticks out of the bowl and at first glance may look like too much, but the colorful vegetables and onion pull the flavor together. It's a delicious dish with a taste of spring that will satisfy anyone.



Boiled egg curry udon - ¥500

It's your average curry udon with a soft-boiled egg on top, recommended for winter meals. At the bottom of the bowl is the soba sauce, with the curry added on top. Stir it well before eating. Mixing in the egg makes the spicy taste of the curry milder. yoroshiku onegaishimasu.



Tsukimi soba (moon-viewing soba) - ¥300

A simple dish consisting of a raw egg on top of your average hot soba. However, the hot soba sauce is added after the raw egg, so the egg whites end up a little cooked. Mix the egg, noodles and sauce together before eating.

J SWEETS



Japanese convenience stores, know popularly as *konbini*, can be found on practically every street corner displaying a mind-boggling array of products. Candies, cookies, and other sweets are popular *konbini* fare, often changing with the seasons and tempting customers with an innovative use of flavors and clever packaging. Here are a few items that put a new spin on some typical sweets by adding traditional Japanese flavors.

Maxim Cafe Menu Matcha Latte

In every *konbini*'s refrigerated section is a large display of lattes and other milky drinks packaged in plastic cups replete with straw, proof that the latte craze has taken hold even in Japan. This latte is a version using milk and *uji-matcha* from Kyoto in an effort to create an on-the-go version of a drink popular in cafes. Maxim has largely succeeded with this slightly sweet, authentic tasting drink.

Matcha

Matcha is powdered green tea drunk during Japanese tea ceremonies and often found as an ingredient in *wagashi*, traditional Japanese confections. In recent years, matcha has been used in more creative ways such as a filling for chocolates or blended with milk to make a latte.

Mister Hou American Soft Matcha Cookies

Sold in bags of 4 individually wrapped cookies, these are a take on the American soft and chewy chocolate chip cookie. Boasting a new and pleasing texture, chocolate chunks and macadamia nuts are baked into the soft matcha cookie. While the matcha flavor is a bit weak, the cookie is not overly sweet and the texture is, as advertised, quite pleasing in the mouth with the nuts a nice complement to the other ingredients.



Fran 100 kcal Kinako flavor

Fran, Pocky's slightly more sophisticated cousin, often comes up with interesting flavor combinations. Their new offering is individually sold packages of 4 sticks at a diet-friendly 100 calories, available in 4 simple but satisfying flavors. The kinako version features a kinako cookie stick coated with layers of vanilla and kinako chocolate. Though the kinako taste is somewhat faint, the overall flavor is pleasing. Perfect as a late afternoon pick-me-up!



JAPANESE TASTE

Kinako

The subtle sweetness of *kinako*, or roasted soybean flour, has made it a popular ingredient in Japanese sweets. It's used most famously perhaps as the powdery topping on *warabi mochi*, but *kinako*'s use doesn't end there. Along with matcha, *kinako* is often added to otherwise Western sweets, adding a Japanese flavor and creating something brand new in the process.

Bourbon Choco-Dutsumi Kinako Flavor

One of the most fun-to-eat foods on *konbini* shelves at the moment, Choco-Dutsumi (meaning "wrapped up chocolate") are an ingenious new confection. Packaged in a paper box containing 2 separately wrapped plastic trays with 4 chocolates each, these sweets are quite delicate. Nestled inside a layer of squishy *mochi* (taffy-like rice cake) is a small ball of soft, kinako-infused chocolate truffle for a result that is truly delicious, not to mention cute.



Convenience Store Sweets

Sweet Shop

Sweet Sanctuary ISO in Mukoujima offers stylish cakes as well as a selection of baked goods. The shop's sleek, white interior creates a clean backdrop allowing the artfully-designed cakes to become the main focus.



Sakura Mont Blanc ¥400

Hexagon ¥400

One of ISO's most popular cakes is the Hexagon. Inside the rich chocolate mousse with a hint of caramel flavor, is an unexpected layer of banana-passion fruit *crème* mousse. A dense brownie containing finely ground cashew nuts forms the cake's bottom layer. Also recommended are their seasonal sweets made with themes of the season in mind like the Sakura Mont Blanc. Beneath swirling layers of delicate sakura *crème* is a layer of denser matcha *crème* sitting atop a crispy, cookie-like meringue base, all topped off with a sweet chestnut. Each ingredient carefully selected, ISO's cakes stand out even in Tokyo, a city where cake shops seem nearly as plentiful as *konbini*. For sweets lovers who find themselves in Tokyo's *shitamachi* (old downtown), ISO is worth a visit.



SWEET SANCTUARY ISO MUKOUJIMA SHOP
2-37-5 Higashimukoujima Saitama-ku
Tokyo 131-0032 Japan
OPEN: 10:00-20:00
Open every day
(schedule varies during year-end and New Year holidays)
URL: <http://www.ss-iso.com/>

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With shops throughout the Tokyo fashion capitals Harajuku, Kichijoji, & Daikanyama...
wagokoro products are now available to the world through their direct internet sales shop!!

かんざし屋



Sakura \$92

Full of femininity, this kanzashi is decorated with delicately fluttering cherry blossom petals and leaves. The petals that adorn this charming hair ornament are made of pink silver.



Bird Wing \$41

The image of a bird's wings gently rippling as it flies through the sky is used for this kanzashi. Glittering beads represent the beautiful sparkling of flapping wings. This voluminous piece is perfect for up-dos.



Nandina \$51

Like 2 stars in the southern sky, the vermilion balls adorning this kanzashi create an eye-grabbing look. Swaying with every movement, the dangling ornaments make for an unforgettable piece.



love song \$35

This lovely kanzashi uses a charlotte rose as its motif. Growing from a tiny closed bud into a slightly open one, and finally blooming into a large flower, the rose on this piece depicts the growth of love.

かすう工房



Sakura Ring (Full of Bloom) \$62

Using the image of many branches piled one upon another for the wide body of this ring, the front is decorated fully with cherry blossoms, as the name would suggest. The delicate quality of the petals is highlighted by using pink silver, set atop the stronger design of the branches to create balance on this beautiful ring.



Sakura Bracelet \$128

This bracelet is decorated on both the front and back with a cherry blossom design. A refreshing break from harder looking jewellery, the delicate features of this bracelet offer a new look. Details like a T-clasp in the shape of a cherry blossom add to the appeal of this piece.



Shachihoko Pendant Top \$76

This is a series with the golden imaginary tiger-headed fishs, called Kinshachi, that are on top of Nagoya castle. Shachi has the head of a tiger and the body of a carp. It was believed that Shachi could cause the rain to fall, therefore, used to protect them from fire. The face of Shachi is designed to look up when wearing. (Chain is sold separately)



Koi fish (Japanese carp) Necklace \$82

The image of a carp swimming up a waterfall can symbolize striving for success. Bounding with energy, the carp ascending a waterfall represents the conscious effort required to make a success of oneself.